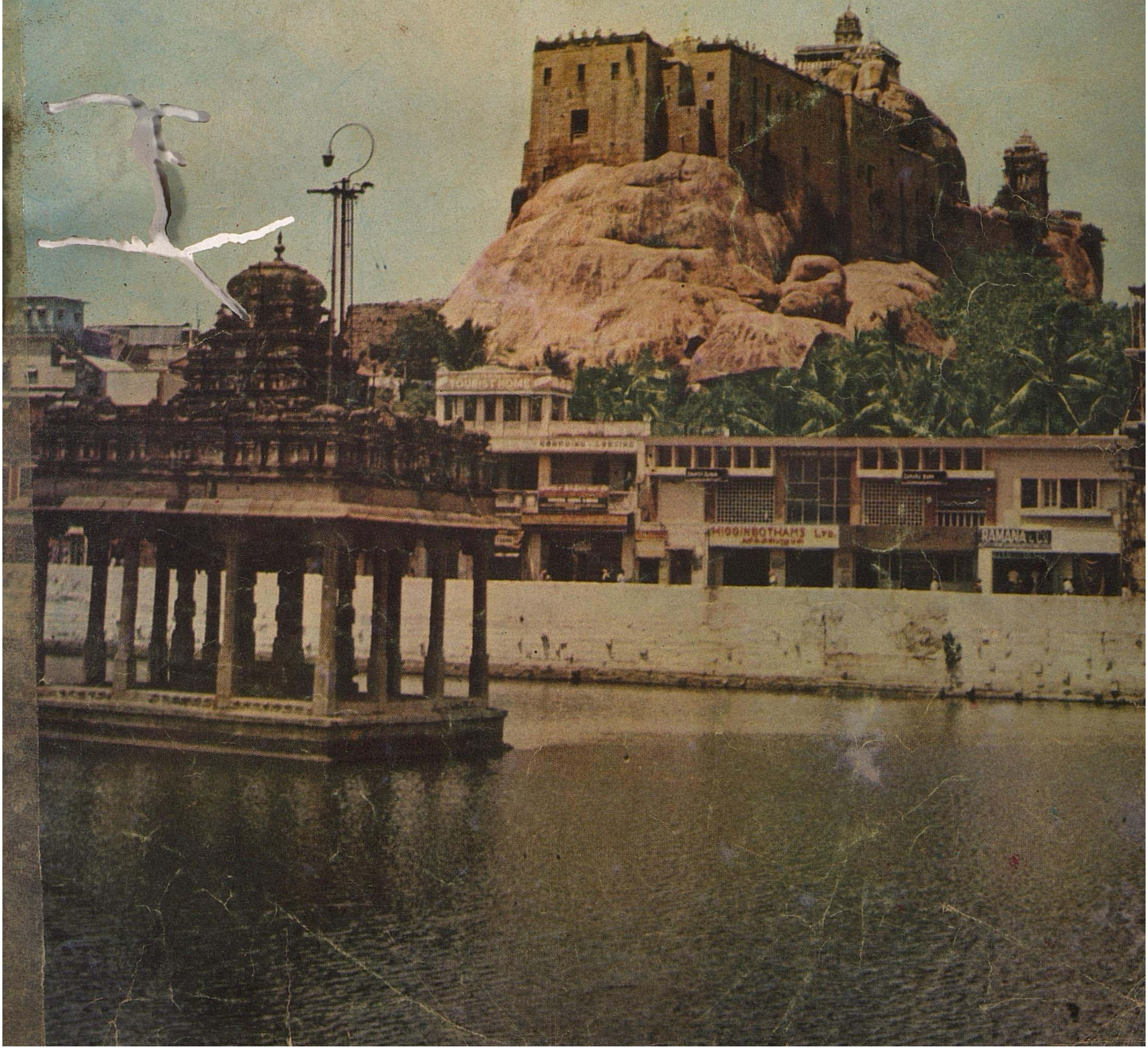
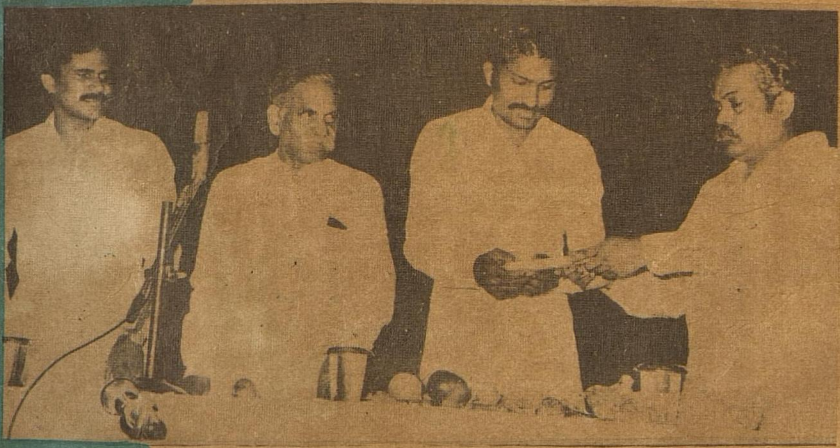
Thiruvalluvar Year 2013
Chithrai—Vaikasi,
Dhundubi

Tamil Arasu

May 1982 75 P.



A memorial coloumn for Thanthai Periyar was unveiled on 9—4—1982 at Thanjavur.



The book "Akkarai Seem[illegible] vaarangal" written by Thiru S. Thirunavukkarasu, Hon'ble Minister for Industries was released on 18—4—1982.

The 92nd Birth Anniversary of Dr. Ambedkar was celebrated at Kalaivanar Arangam on 18—4—1982.

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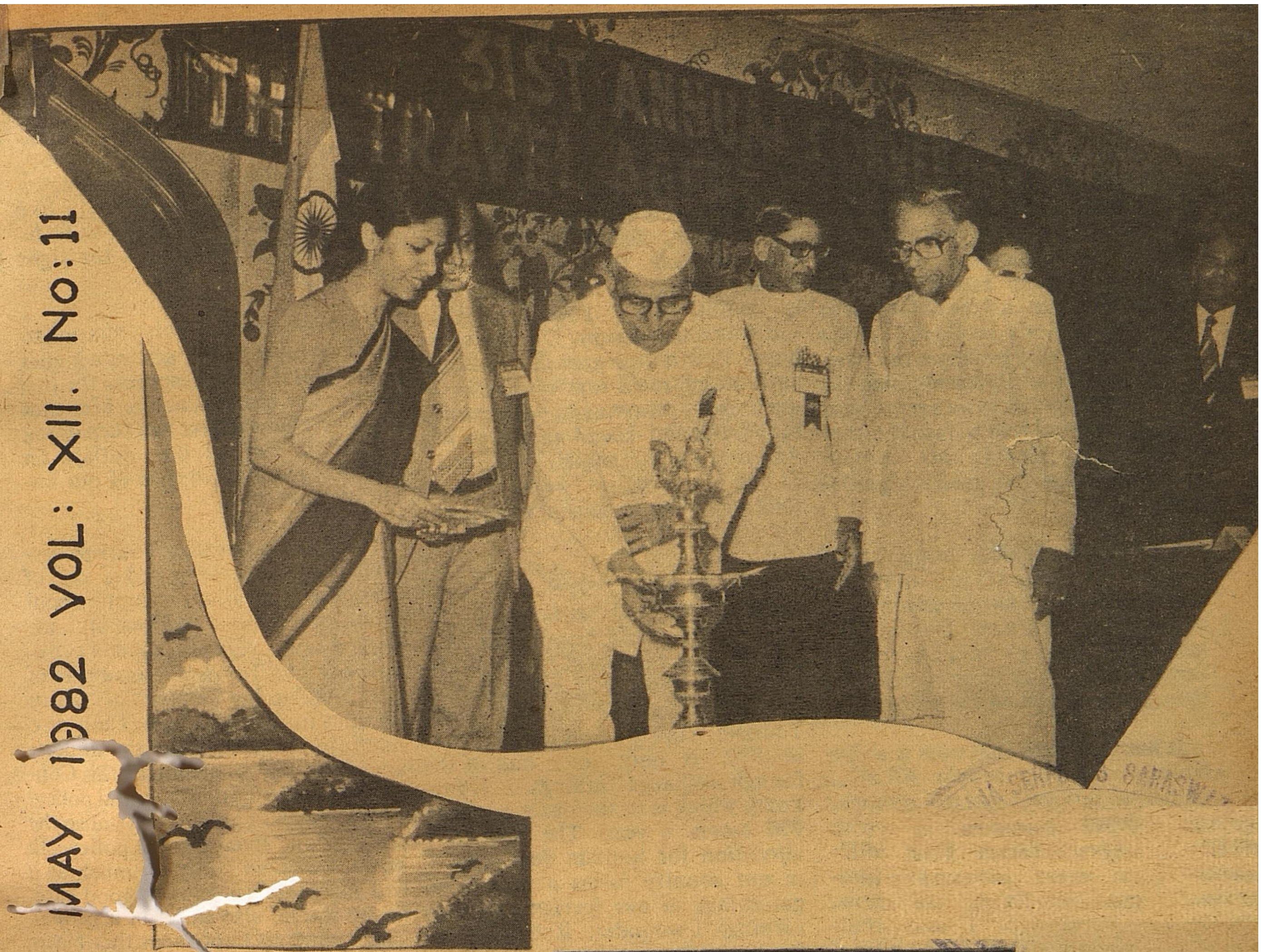


PROMOTE DOMESTIC TOURISM

Honourable Minister for Tourism and Civil Aviation Thiru Sharma, Dr. Venkatraman, Thiru Sanghi and other Office bearers of TAAI, Thiru Srivatsan and other distinguished Delegates to this Convention,

I have great pleasure to be amidst you when our Hon'ble Union Minister is to inaugurate the 31st Annual Convention of the Travel Agents Association of India. At the outset, I would like to extend on behalf of the Government of Tamil Nadu and on my own behalf, a very hearty welcome to our Union Minister and all other distinguished Delegates to this Convention.

It is in the fitness of things that this 31st Convention is held in Madras which is the Eastern Gateway to India and it is equally appropriate that it is inaugurated by our esteemed friend Thiru Sharma who has within a short period of his tenure, has several achievements like the abolition of the foreign travel tax to his credit. His latest achievement, for which I have to congratulate him, is his success in persuading his colleague to abolish the Hotel Receipts Tax. It augurs well for the future to have a dynamic, efficient and affable person like Thiru Sharma at the helm of affairs. I have only one grievance against him, that is, he is not able to come down to South as often as we would like him to come, I hope he will at least make up this in the future.

I am particularly delighted to be associated with this Convention of the Travel Agents, because I am one of the firm belivers in the key role that the Travel Agents play. Although the Central and State Governments build up the infrastructure and promote the tourist attractions, it is the Travel Agents who really play the crucial role of actually selling the product. Effective and imaginative marketing make all the difference to the popularity of a product. It is the Travel Agent who packages the tourist attractions and presents them to the Tourist. So the travel agents have to play a crucial role to face the challenges of the 80's. In this context this convention has special significance.

I am happy to note that a record number of Delegates are attending this convention. I would attach a lot of importance to your deliberations and conclusions. I would like to take this opportunity to share some of my thoughts with you on the subject.

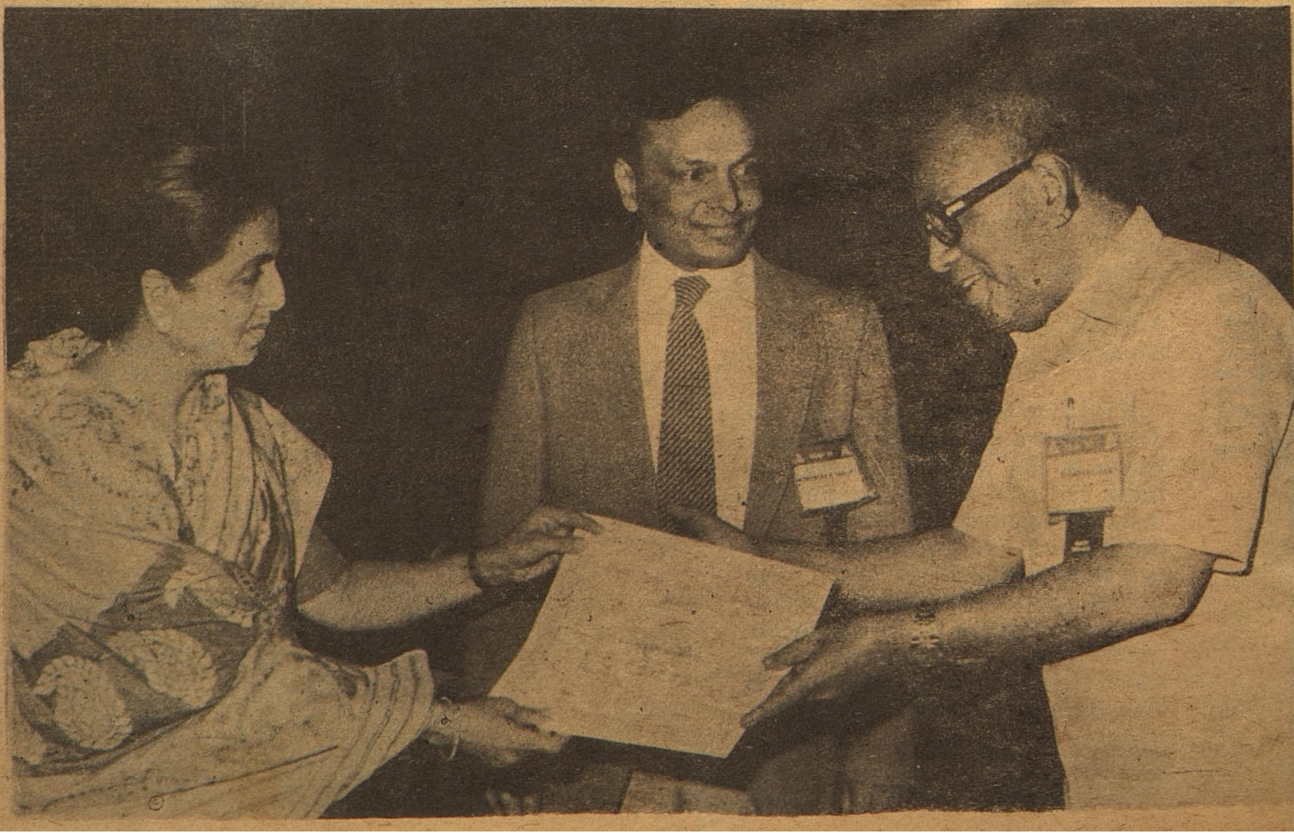
It has been said that ours is a rich country with poor people. All of us in public service have the responsibility to make it a rich country with rich people. This is, no doubt, a difficult task, but by no means an impossible one. As you all know, Tourism is one of the important means of achieving this end of rapid economic development and eradicating poverty. It has great relevance to a developing country like ours, not only because of its employment potential, capacity to earn foreign exchange but also because the tourist expenditure percolates throughout the economy and benefits many segments of the community. Unfortunately, Tourism has suffered by default in the past. This is perhaps a reflection of the popular misconception that Tourism is a leisure activity of the affluent and it benifits only those engaged in the tourism industry. On the other hand, it is a fast growing industry and international tourism has become a mass movement with varied economic and social ramifications. As a result of this neglect, in the sixties and the seventies, we have got a long way to go to catch up with even our small neighbours.

India occupies 2.3 per cent of the world's space and has nearly 15 per cent of the world population. But our share of the world tourist arrivals is only about 0.28 per cent. Our foreign exchange earnings from Tourism, namely about Rs. 482 crores in 1980 is only about half of the foreign exchange earnings of Hongkong, which is in the order of about 930 crores a year. The budgetary allocation for tourism development in our country forms a very small percentage of our foreign exchange earnings. I wounder, if it is the reflection of the mistaken notion that a poor country with scarce resources cannot afford to spend much on tourism. One redeeming feature is that we have woken up at last and thanks to the pioneering efforts of people like Dr. Karan Singh and now due to the dynamism of Thiru Sharma and his able Secretary Dr. Venkatraman we find encouraging trends at Delhi. I would only like to submit that a lot more has to be done although we are on the right path at last.

I would appeal to Thiru Sharma to continue his battle for getting a higher priority and larger resources for this sector. Let me also assure him that my Government here has been doing its best to step up the outlays on Tourism manifold in spite of our financial constraints.

Once we accept that Tourism deserves a higher priority and is one of the effective means of bringing about rapid economic development we should have a very well defined national policy on Tourism. I am aware of the pioneering efforts of Thiru Sharma in this direction. I am also happy to note that one of the important subjects of discussion at this Convention relates to this national policy. I hope this will help to crystalise the policy soon. Even a good policy can be implemented badly as much as a bad Advocate can spoil a good case. So we should also think of a proper frame work to implement this National Tourism policy.

Tourism cannot be promoted successfully by the Government alone.



It has to be a joint effort of the Government, Travel Trade and the people. I hope this Convention would take note of this and come to suitable conclusion to promote and ensure a joint and co-ordinated effort.

In order to reap maximum benefit from the development of Tourism, it is not only necessary to attract larger number of tourists, but it is also necessary to ensure a proper dispersal of the tourist inflow without allowing it to overcrowd certain places. This calls for a balanced development of the tourist infrastructure in all the regions which have tourist attractions. In this context I wish to to point out certain relevant facts, if you do not mistake me to be parochial. It is an indisputable fact that South has not received due attention commensurate with the tourist attractions of the region. I only wish to cite a few instances not by way of complaints, but just to bring them to the notice of our Chief Guest and to request him to initiate remedial measures.

It has been one of our long pending requests to route more international flights through Madras, which is the Eastern Gateway to India. Even the Public Accounts Committee of the Government of India has pointed out that Madras Airport is under-utilised, while the Bombay Airport is very crowded. There is urgent need to link up Madras with the Eastern and Western Countries by direct flights. I am grateful to you, Sir for sanctioning a separate domestic terminal for the Madras Airport. The International terminal also requires to be expanded and this work has to be expedited. The Indian Airlines Schedules also leave much to be desired. I understand that in terms of revenue earnings, 5 of the first 8 Airports are in South India. In spite of this, very few new services have been introduced. There is need to connect places like Madurai, Tiruchi and Trivandrum with Colombo and also to connect them with each other. There is sufficient justification for these new services.

I must congratulate you for your initiative in introducing the third airline services. I would request you to expedite the introduction of the Feeder services in the Southern Region soon. I am grateful to you for sanctioning the project for strengthening of the Madurai Airport to receive Boeings and there is urgent need to strengthen the Tiruchi and Coimbatore Airports also to meet the immediate requirements.

I understand that the group tourists coming into our country from a very small percentage of our total tourists mainly because we have not paid adequate attention to promote charter flights. If we are to take a lesson from the experience of the neighbouring countries, we should do something, about the operation of the charters at a very early date. The Travel Agents should take the initiative in this regard and may in the first instance seek to route Scandinavian charters coming to Colombo through Madras. In this connection, I wish to tell the distinguished delegates that South India offers vast scope for special interest tours like Golfing tours, Wildlife tours, Cultural tours, etc,.

Another fact which I would like to bring to your notice is that Rameswaram has become a major port of entry for the charter tourists who come to Colombo. Despite the fact that the shipping services between Talaimannar and Rameswaram is operated only for about nine months in a year, as many as, 72,000 tourists have entered via Rameswaram in 1979. This is a little more than the tourists entering through Madras. There is very great potential in this region to be tapped.

There is already a proposal to run a shipping service round the year to link up Colombo with Rameswaram. I would request our Chief Guest to take this up with the Ministry of Shipping to arrange for a year round shipping service linking Sri Lanka with South India. This will bring in a lot of tourists and it may not be irrelevant to state here that we have drawn up a Master plan for the development of Rameswaram and the nearby islands. We have forwarded this to the Government of India requesting foreign aid as the magnitude of the investment would be beyond the capacity of the State Government. External borrowing for Tourism projects could be justified on the ground that the project when completed would earn foreign exchange many more times enabling us to repay the loan.

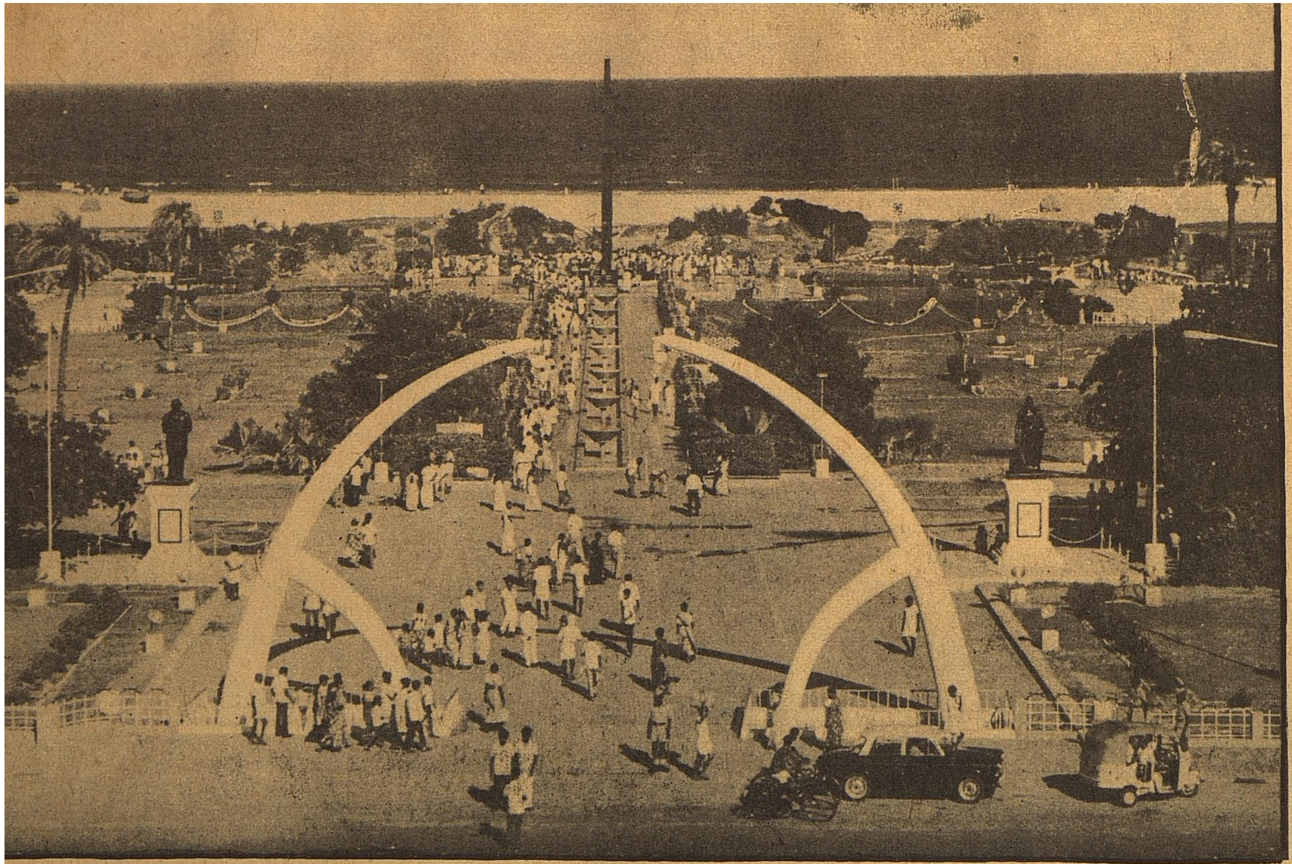
I have only one more thought to share with you. It is said that our Travel Agents do not pay much attention to promote domestic tours as the margin of profits is rather low. I don't know how far this is correct. If the Travel Agents could offer suitable packages for domestic tours at reasonable prices, this would be availed of by a large number of people and it would be a low profit but high volume proposition.

We always refer to the vastness of our country using the term 'Kashmir to Kanniyakumari', I would only like to urge that Kanniyakumari should receive at least half the attention which Kashmir has received.

I wish to thank the Chief Guest for a number of things which he has done to us and I wish to assure him that in his efforts to usher in a Tourism revolution in our country, we would be with him.

Before I conclude, I wish to thank our Chief Guest for being with us today and to thank the organisers of this Convention for giving me this unique opportunity of meeting you all.

[Speech delivered by Thiru R. M. Veerappan, Minister for Information, Religious Endowments and Tourism at the Inauguration of the 31st Annual Convention of Travel Agents Association of India, at Madras.]



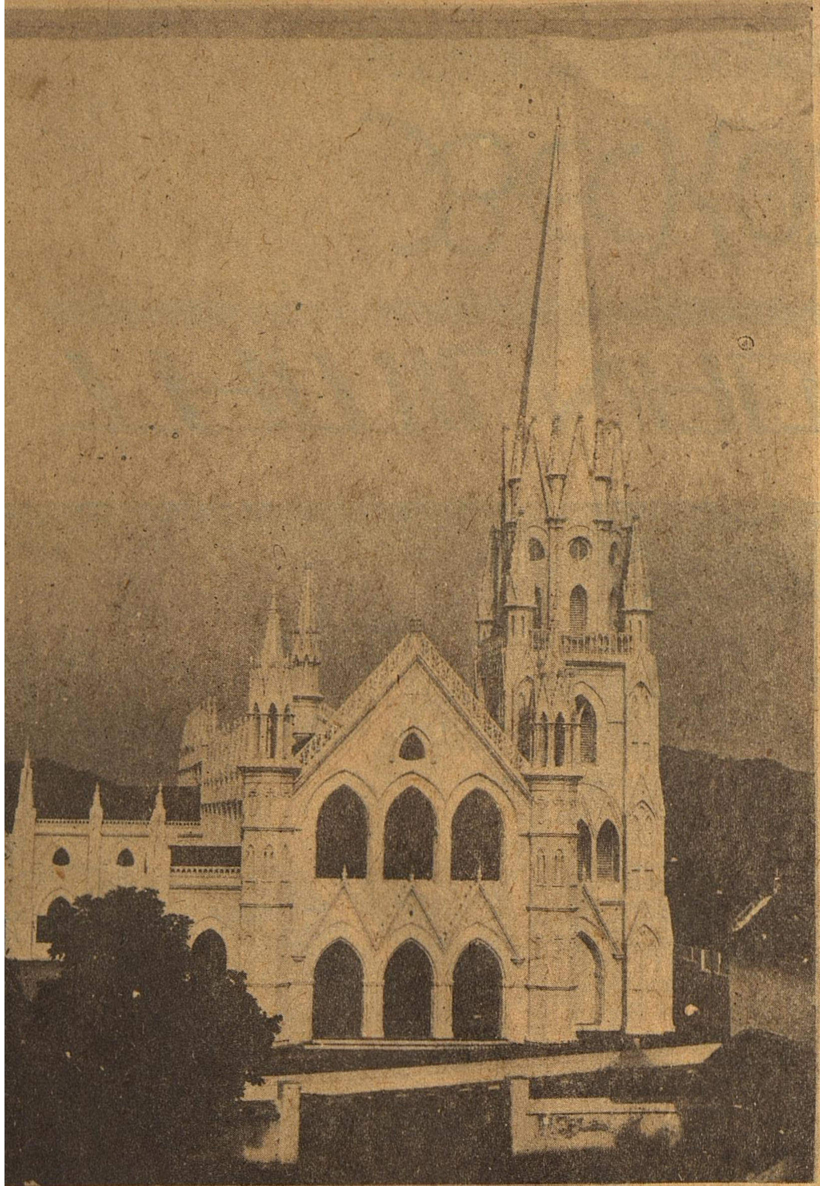
TAMIL NADU

BECKONS YOU

Tall plams and taller gopurams, the towering, intricately carved temple towers amidst a land of oriental lushness greet the traveller to Tamil Nadu, a land that is truly the soul of the South itself. A land of sun and warmth, of temples and legends and of silver lined beaches. Tamil Nadu, lush and colour drenched, sunburnt and romantic, the essence of an Eastern lifestyle, is inexpensive, with the best of accommodation available to suit every pocket and every taste.

Tamil Nadu is a window to the modern South as much as it is a wide open archive of ancient legacies. Yet amazingly, for all its modern-day progress, Tamil Nadu retains its old-world charm. The blend of the ancient and the new and the picturesque is truly remarkable. A land that has seen the rise and fall of many ancient kingdoms, the Cholas, the Pandyas, the Cheras, the Pallavas and many others, each leaving behind incredible cultural treasures.

From Madras, the capital and gateway to Tamil Nadu, no place is too far. Excellent road, rail and air services speed travellers to any point in this ancient land. Spread around are capitals of once-proud kingdoms. Like magnifi-cent Madurai, its Meenakshi temple one of the wonders of India, and Thanjavur, its Brahadeswarar temple, a tribute to the splendour of Chola builders. Here is the replica of historic Poompuhar, the Chola port and planned city known to Ptolemy and Pliny. Here are the Pallava towns of Kanchipuram and Mammallapuram, the former, one of the seven sacred Hindu cities, a town of a thousand temples, the



latter, famed for its monuments and sculpture but now becoming better known as one of India's finest beach resorts. Here are Tiruchirapalli and Kanniyakumari where ancient legends live on, in rock and plaster and wood. Here are hill stations, that waft the aroma of tea and coffee, eucalyptus and pine. Hill resorts that seem like little bits of England's green country, that are as rugged as India's own.

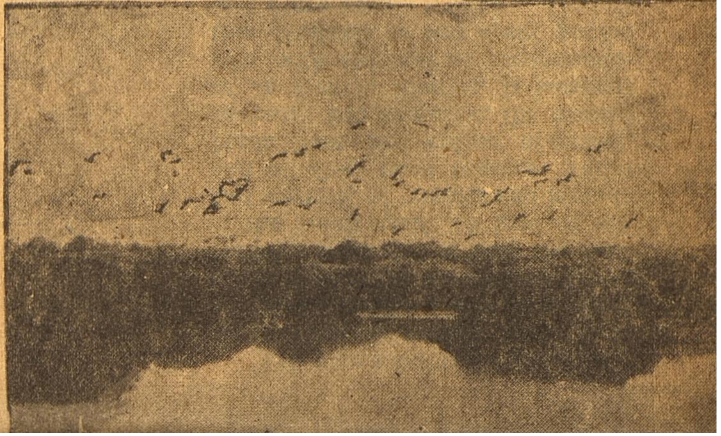
The Chidambaram Temple is dedicated to Nataraja, the God Siva in the form of the Cosmic Dancer. Tiruchirappalli is famous for its Rock Temple built on a rock rising abruptly to over 83m. The holy town of Rameswaram on the south-eastern tip of the Indian peninsula, contains one of India's most venerated temples, distinguished for its carved and pillared corridars.

All along the coast of South India are long stretches of warm sands, shaded by groves of casuarinas and stately palms. But perhaps the most wonderous of all is Kanniyakumari, the tip of India, washed by three seas. Here the sand is not merely golden, it is sparkling white, pale pink, creamy yellow and even dark red.

The beating surf, the din of voices, and the loud sounds of a moving sea and people are at once delightful and captivating. The Marina Beach, one of the longest in the world, is an open stretch of sparkling blue invitation, reminiscent perhaps of the French Riviera. The beaches of Mammallapuram, exotic and lavish, the cradle of ancient Indian culture, now amongst the most popular of sea resorts.

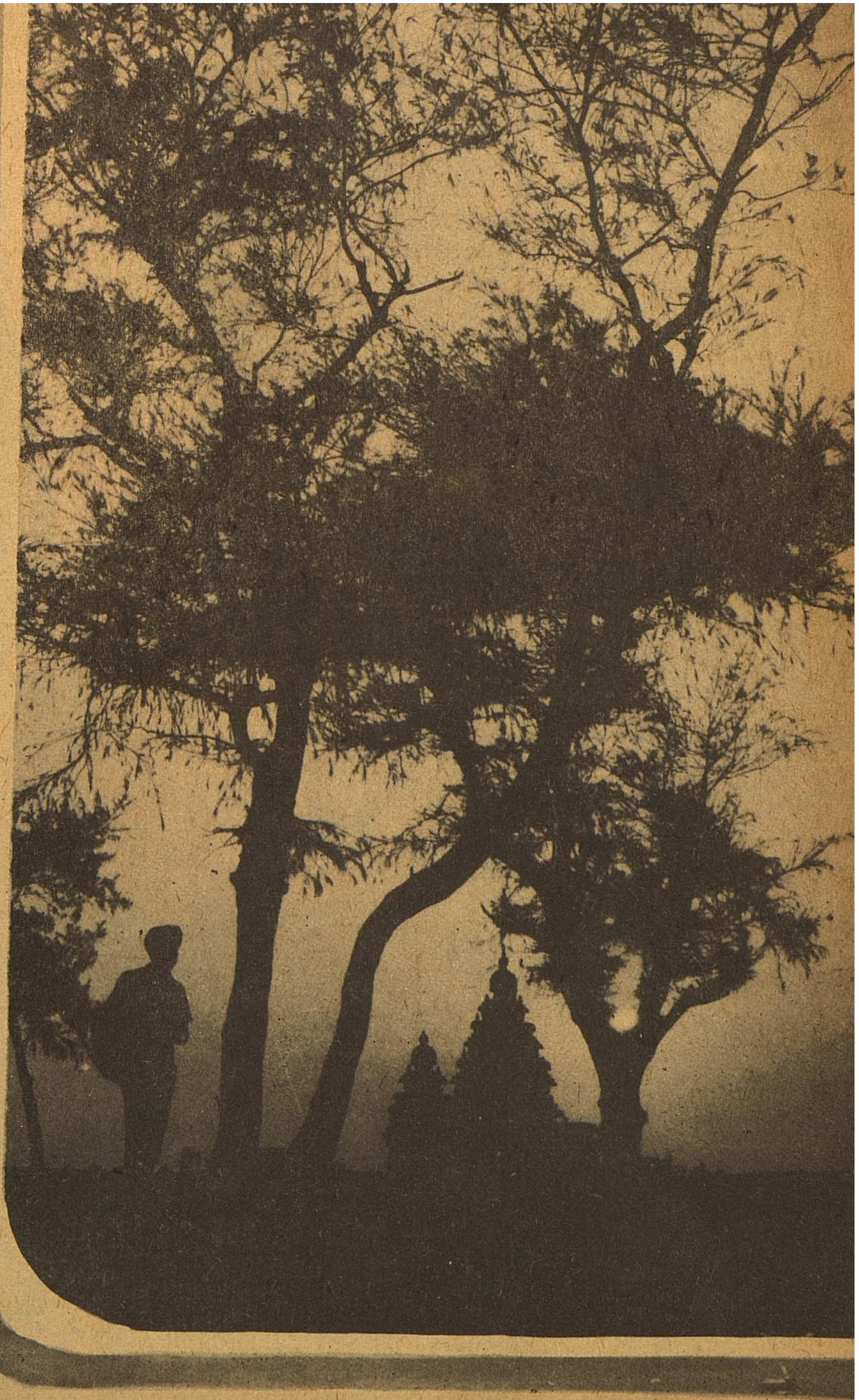
The states of Tamil Nadu and Mysore merge in a lovely cluster of hills, the Nilgiris or Blue Mountains. Crowning the Nilgiris is the delightful hill-station of Uthagamandalam with a wealth of eucalyptus trees that give the air a distinct freshness, further south is Kodaikanal. carpeted with wild flowers and faintly scented with honeysuckle.

"Snooty Ooty", the queen of hill resorts, boasts of botanical gardens, annual flower shows, select hotels and clubs, golf, tennis, horse-racing and shopping. It is also the stepping stone for Kotagiri, Coonoor, Doddabetta, Snowdown, Elk Hill, Cairn Hill and Mukurti Peak, Kodaikanal, a mere 120 kms from Madurai exhibits the famous coffee plantations of the South. A lake with a promenadeall around with boating. Coakers Walks' Silver Cascade, a number of falls and a century old observatory give it an individuality of its own. As you descend from the hills the forests become thicker and richer. Forests and sanctuaries untouched by man, Mudumalai and Anaimalai and Vedanthangal and Point



Calimere, where the deer and the buffalo roam and the stork and the flamingo and egrel nest. Where you can enjoy a thrilling elephant ride into a forest of antelopes, monkeys, tigers and leopards.

The Mudumalai Wildlife Sanctuary is on the Ooty-Mysore Road; tiger, leopard, slothbear, elephant, bison, sambar, chital, and barking deer wander within its terrains in wild abandonment. The Madras Aquarium displays predatory fish, separated from humanity only by a glass wall. The National Deer Park at Guindy, Madras is the only one of its kind in the country and the Snake Park is a showcase for reptilian wildlife. Cool forests everywhere provide refuge to myriad species of birds too many to be listed anywhere. Tamil Nadu the home of Carnatic music and Bharatha Natyam, a legacy of temple songs and dances handed down through the centuries, the home of magnificent schools, of art and architecture, and of great cultures and philosophies. Gloriously ancient. Proud preserver of India's traditions. Now magnificently modern.



MADRAS

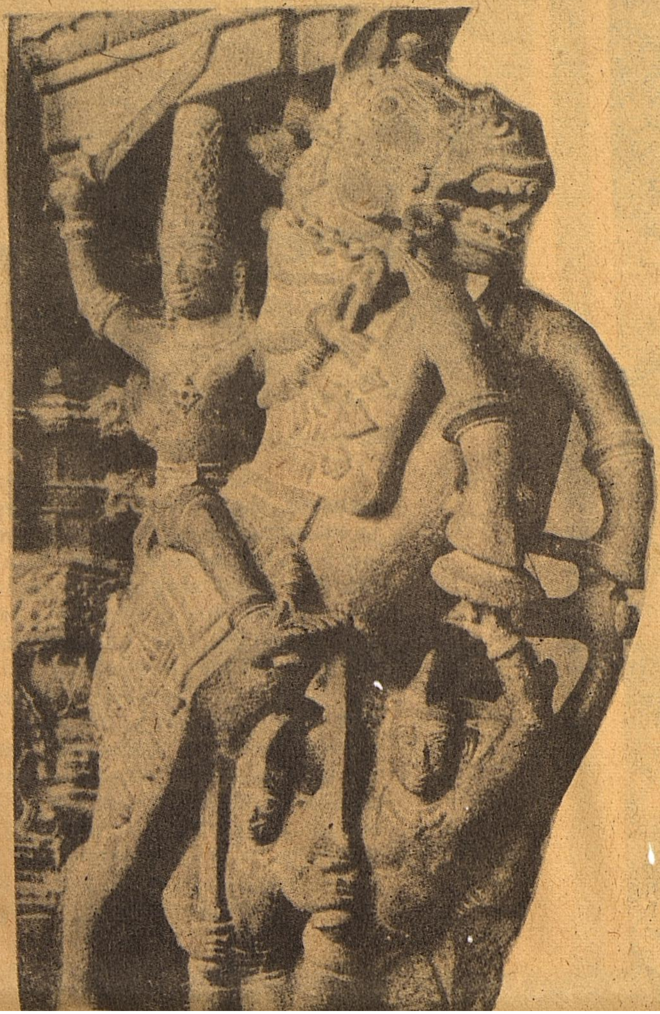
A tiny fishing village now turned into a sprawling metropolis, capital of Tamilnadu. Places to see include Fort St. George, a former bastion of the East India Company and presently housing the Tamilnadu State Legislature and the Secretariat; Marina, one of the longest beaches in the world and Anna Memorial, San Thome Cathedral Basilica, a magnificient cathedral built over the tomb of St. Thomas; Theosophical Society, located on the Banks of River Adyar, and founded by Annie Besant, Olcott and Blavatsky, the world headquarters of the Society of all Faiths; Kalakshetra, where Bharata Natyam and other classical dances of India are taught. National Deer Park, which includes a childrens Park and a Reptilium located within the city with memorials to national leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Kamaraj and Rajaji providing an added attraction; Valluvarkottam, built in the memory of Saint Thiruvalluvar, who wrote the world famous classic Thirukkural, Kapaleeswarar Temple, a fine example of Dravidian temple architecture, dedicated to Lord Siva, Museum & Art Gallory, one of the oldest in the world, houses a superb collection of bronzes.

VEDANTHANGAL

A major water-bird sanctuary, this bird-watcher's paradise is only 83 km, from Madras on the road to Tiruchi. The best season is from October to March. Regular bus services are available from Madras and Chengalpattu.

MAMALLAPURAM

Once a flourishing port of the Pallavas of ancient India, this little resort is today a major holiday centre in South India. Places to see include the Shore Temple, the Five Rathas and Arjuna's Penance and the Tiger Cave. About 10 km. north is a crocodile farm and 15 km. west is Thirukazhukkundram, a pilgrim centre, known for its holy kites.

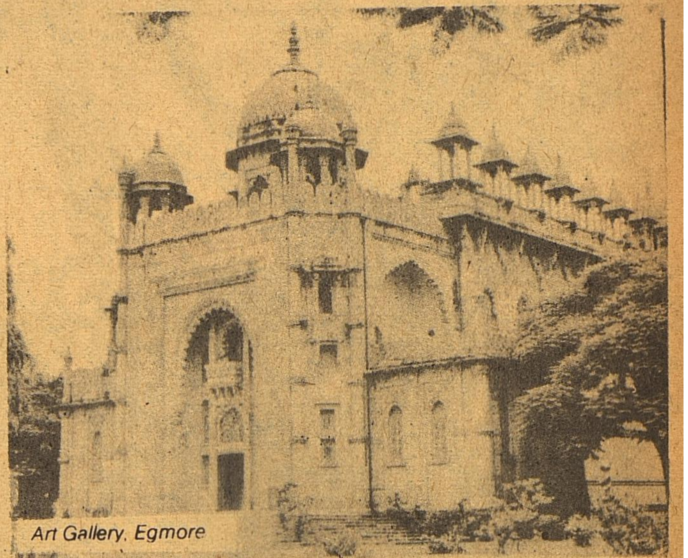


KANCHEEPURAM

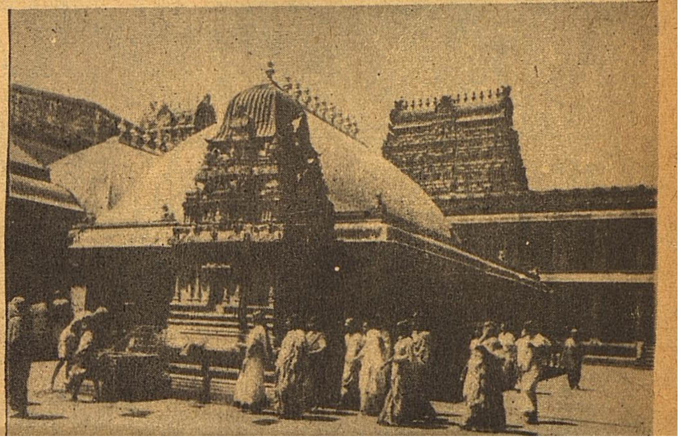
"The city of a thousand temples" it is one of the seven sacred cities of India. A former capital of the Pallavas, it is famous for its exquisitely woven silk sarees. Places to see include Ekambareswarar Temple, Varadarajaswamy Temple, Vaikuntha Perumal Temple, Kailasanathar Temple, Kamakshi Amman Temple and the homes of silk fabric weavers.

CHIDAMBARAM

A famous pilgrim centre with its main temple dedicated to Lord Nataraja, the Cosmic Dance aspect of Lord Siva. The Annamalai University located here is a major residential university. 16 km away is Pichavaram, a place of rare scenic beauty with its serene backwaters dotted with dense green forests.



Art Gallery, Egmore



MADURAI

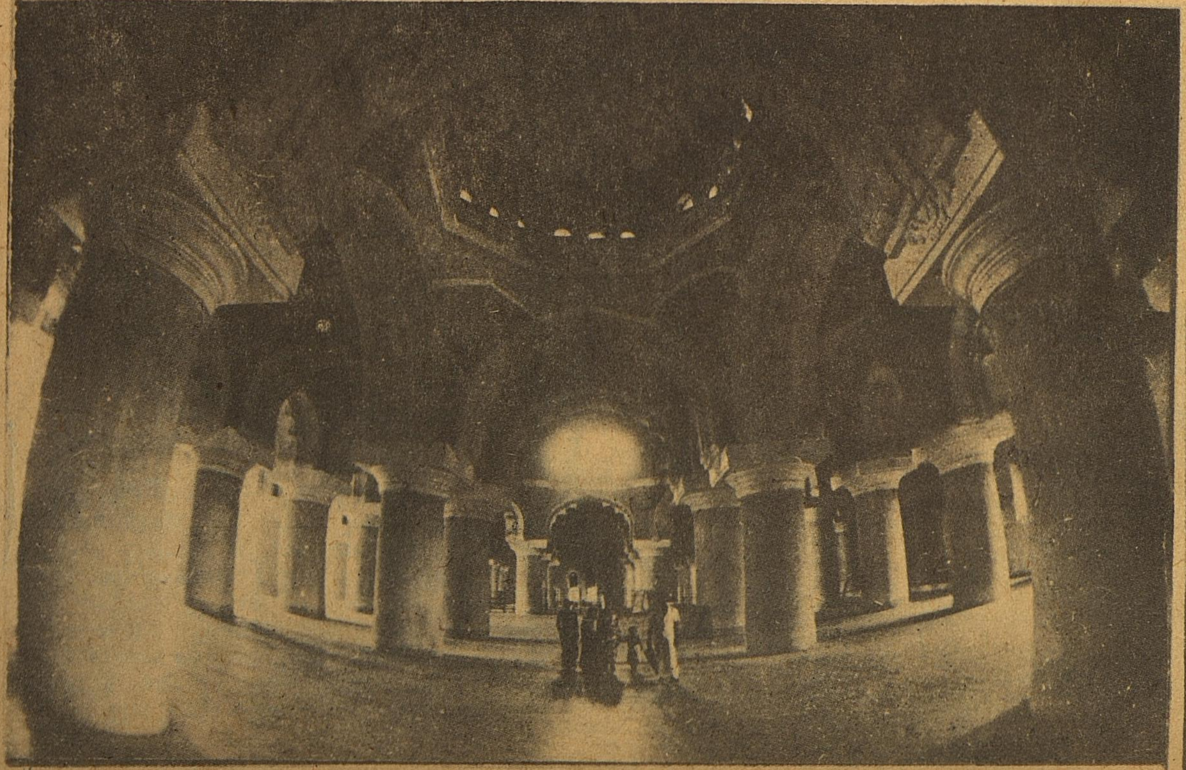
Once the capital city of the Pandyas, Madurai is today the second largest city in Tamilnadu, famous for its Meenakshi Temple, with its towering gopurams and rare sculptures. Other important attractions include the Thirumalai Naicker Palace, Mariamman Tank, Koodal Azhagar Temple and the Gandhi Museum. Nearby excursions include the Murugan Temple at Thiruparankundram (8 km.) the Palani Temple (122 km), the Suruli Waterfalls (128 km.) Courtallam Waterfalls (160 kms) and Vaigai Dam (68 km.) Across the border, in Kerala State, is the famous Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary, only 146 km. away.

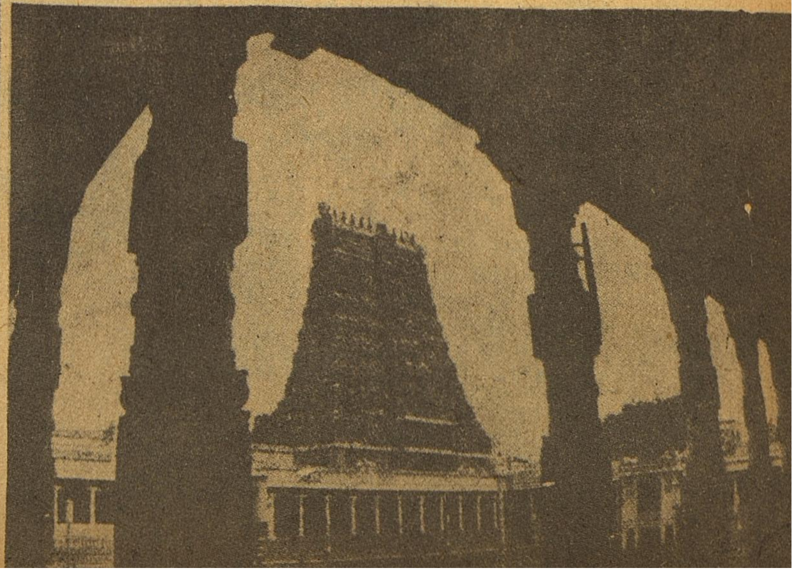
KODAIKANAL :

One of India's most beautiful hill stations at an altitude of 2133 mts. (7000 feet), visited in large numbers right through the year. Places of interest include Bryantt Park, Pillar Rocks, Lake, Solar Observatory, Perumal Peak, Silver Cascade, Telescope Houses at Coaker's Walk and Kurinji Andavar Temple, Museum and Orchidorium at Sacred Heart College, Shenbaganur.

COURTALLAM

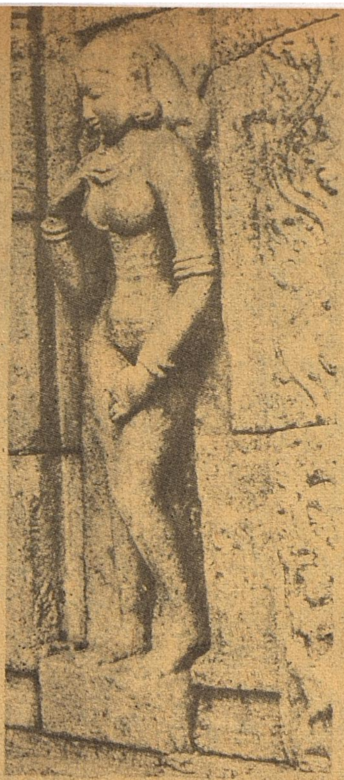
A sylvan spa known as a health resort. Its waterfalls are known for their curative properties. Its bracing climate extends particularly from June to September. Popular excursions are possible to Tiruchendur Murugan Temple (99 km.), Tirunelveli (50 km.), Krishnapuram (60 km.) and Tenkasi (5 km.) The Mundanthurai Tiger Sanctuary is about 75 km. from here.

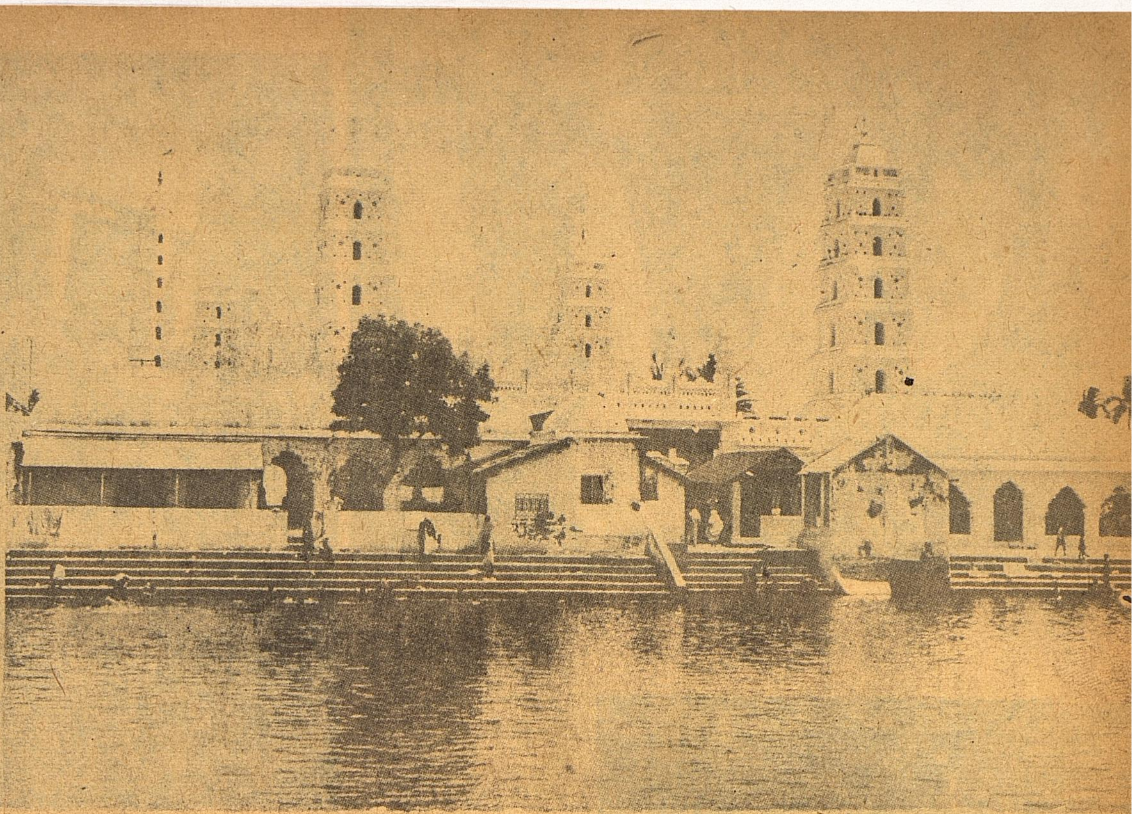


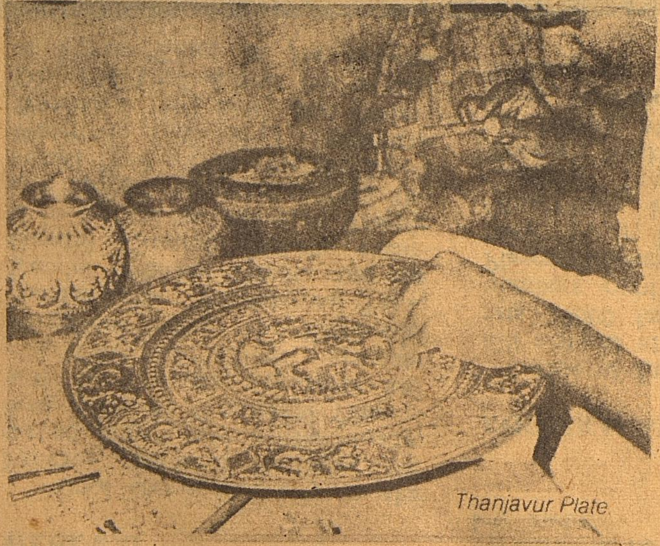


THANJAVUR

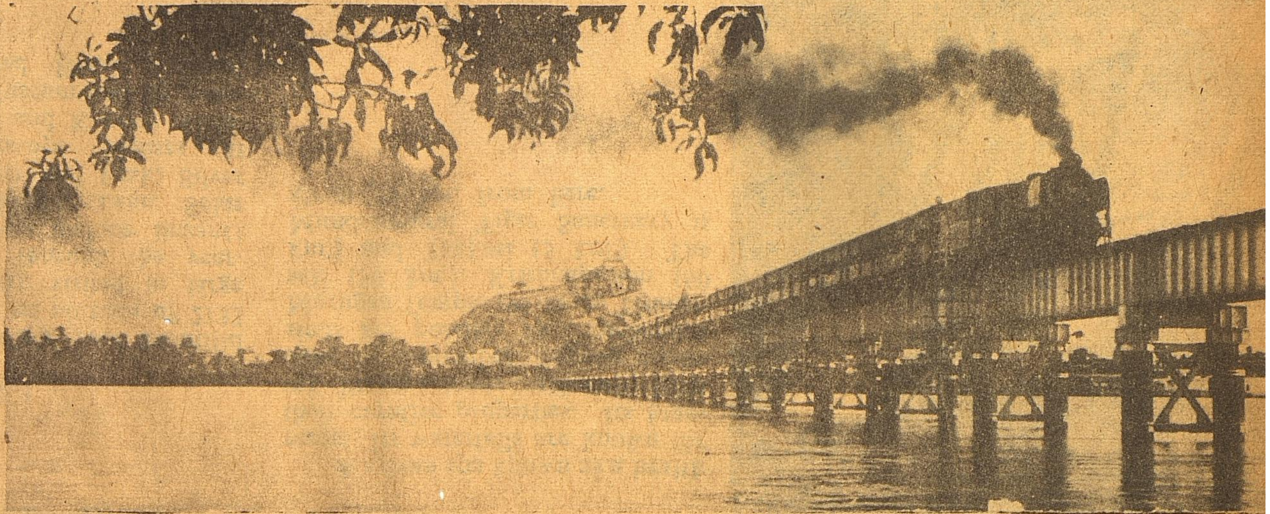
The home of traditional handicrafts and musical instruments, it is more renowned for the Brahadeeswarar Temple. The town of Thanjavur is also the headquarters of the district of the same name. The district is the granary of Tamilnadu. The Art Gallery and the Saraswathi Mahal Library are also well known points of interest. Excursions include the temples of Thiruvaiyaru, Thirukandiyur, Kumbakonam and Tirubuvanam and Darasuram, all within 40 km. At Gangaikondacholapuram (71 kms.) is a temple dedicated to Lord Siva: Nagore is 85 km. away and is a renowned pilgrim centre for muslims: Velankanni, 90 km. away is a sacred place for christians.





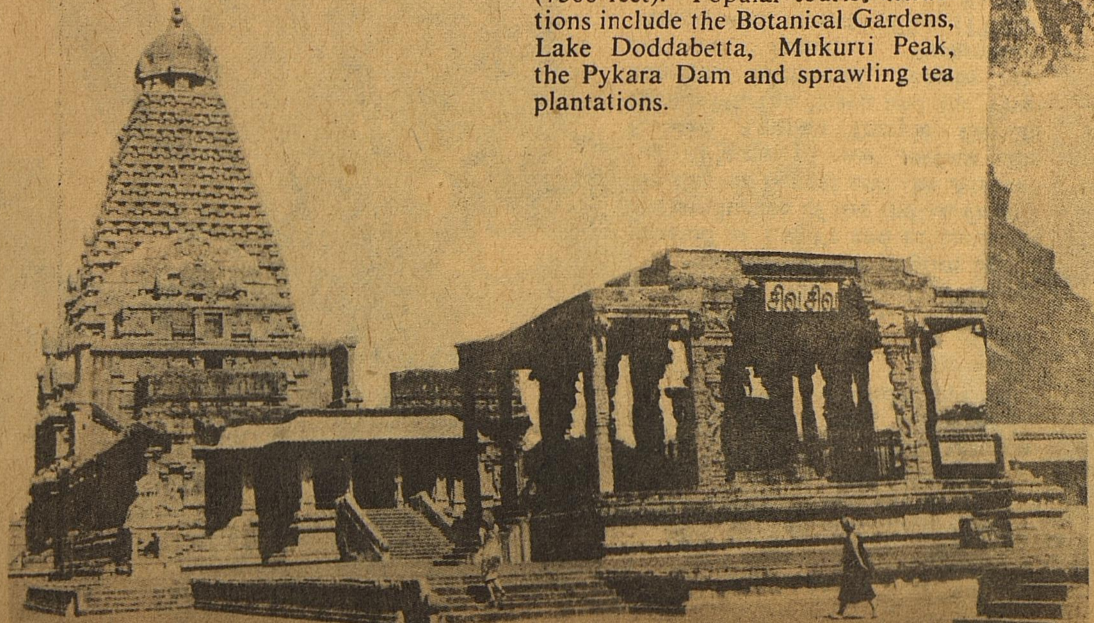


Thanjavur Plate



TIRUCHIRAPPALLI

Formerly, the scene of many a battle during the Carnatic wars, today a district headquarters. Most famous is the Rock Fort, abruptly rising to over 83 metres. Other notable temples are the Srirangam the Sri Ranganathaswamy Temple and the Siva Temple at Tiruvanaikaval. Worthwhile excursions should include Narthamalai, Kudimianmalai, Kodumbalur for their ancient temple architecture. Sittannavasal has some ancient Jain caves with intricate wall paintings. Grand Anicut, across the Cauvery River is a 2nd century engineering marvel and a fine picnic spot, 19 km. from Tiruchi, Avudaiyar Kovil, 110 km, away, is known for its life-size sculptures.



HOGENAKAL

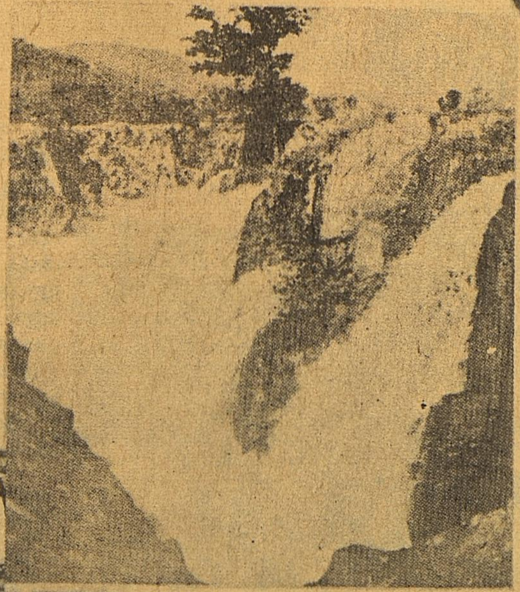
A health resort, known for its waterfalls with medicinal properties, set amidst lush green woods. Bangalore is the nearest airport, about 130 km. away, while Madras is 350 km. from here.

YERCAUD

Near Salem in the Servarayan Hills, Yercaud is a year-round tourist attraction. Altitude 1500 mts. (5000 feet). Places of interest include the Lake, Anna Park, Orchidorium, Killiyur Falls, Pagoda Point, Bear's Cave and the Servarayan Temple.

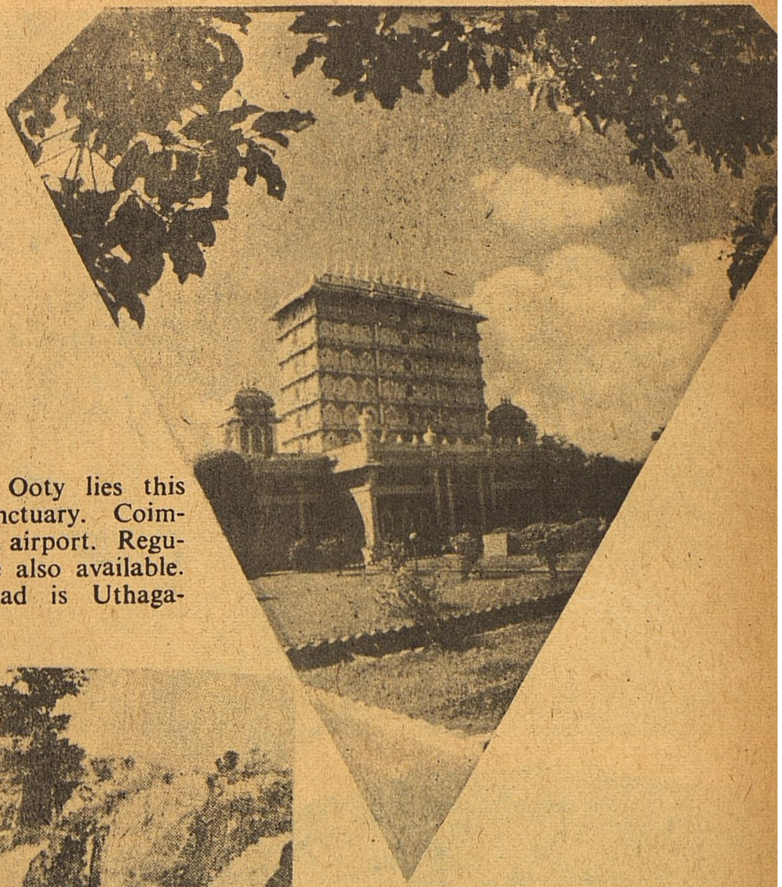
UTHAGAMANDALAM

Popularly referred to as 'Queen of India's Hill Stations', Ooty is located at a height of 2286 mts. (7500 feet). Popular tourist attractions include the Botanical Gardens, Lake Doddabetta, Mukurti Peak, the Pykara Dam and sprawling tea plantations.



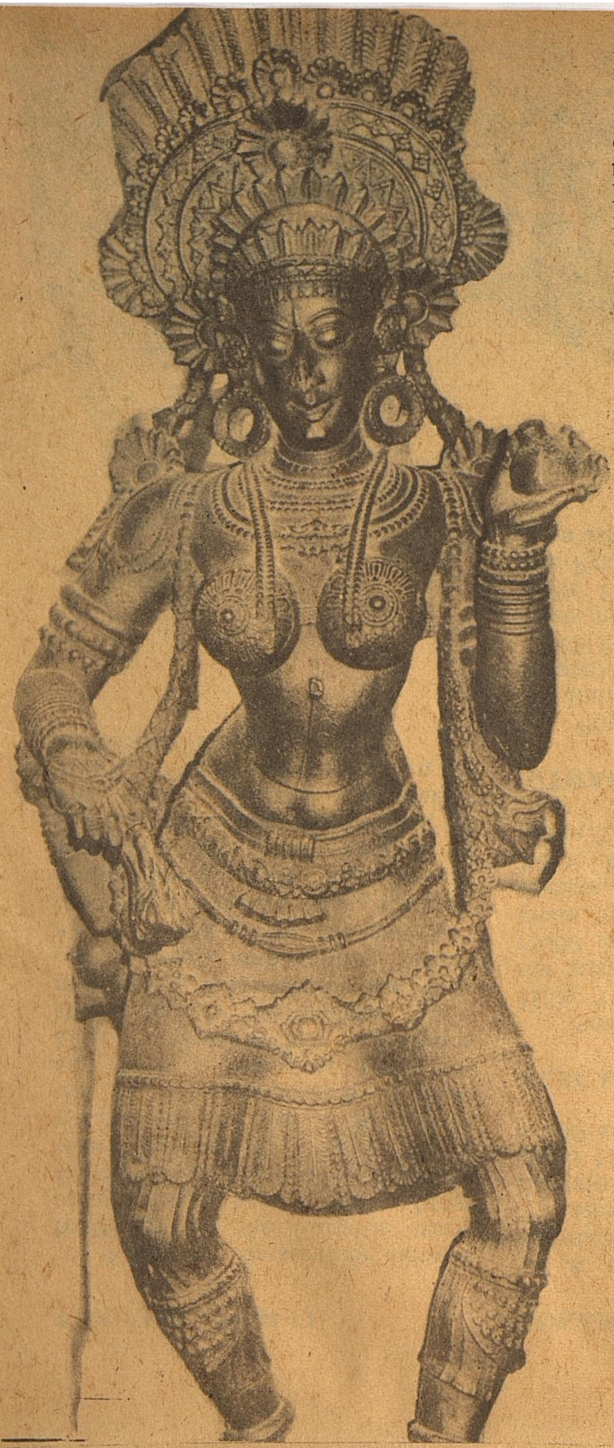
MUDUMALAI

60 km. from Ooty lies this famous wild life sanctuary. Coimbatore is the nearest airport. Regular bus services are also available. The nearest railhead is Uthagamandalam.



POOMPUHAR

Situated at the confluence of River Cauvery in Thanjavur district, this was the ancient port of the Cholas. See the Poompuhar Art Gallery, the Elanji Manram, Pavai Manram, Nedungal Manram and the beach.

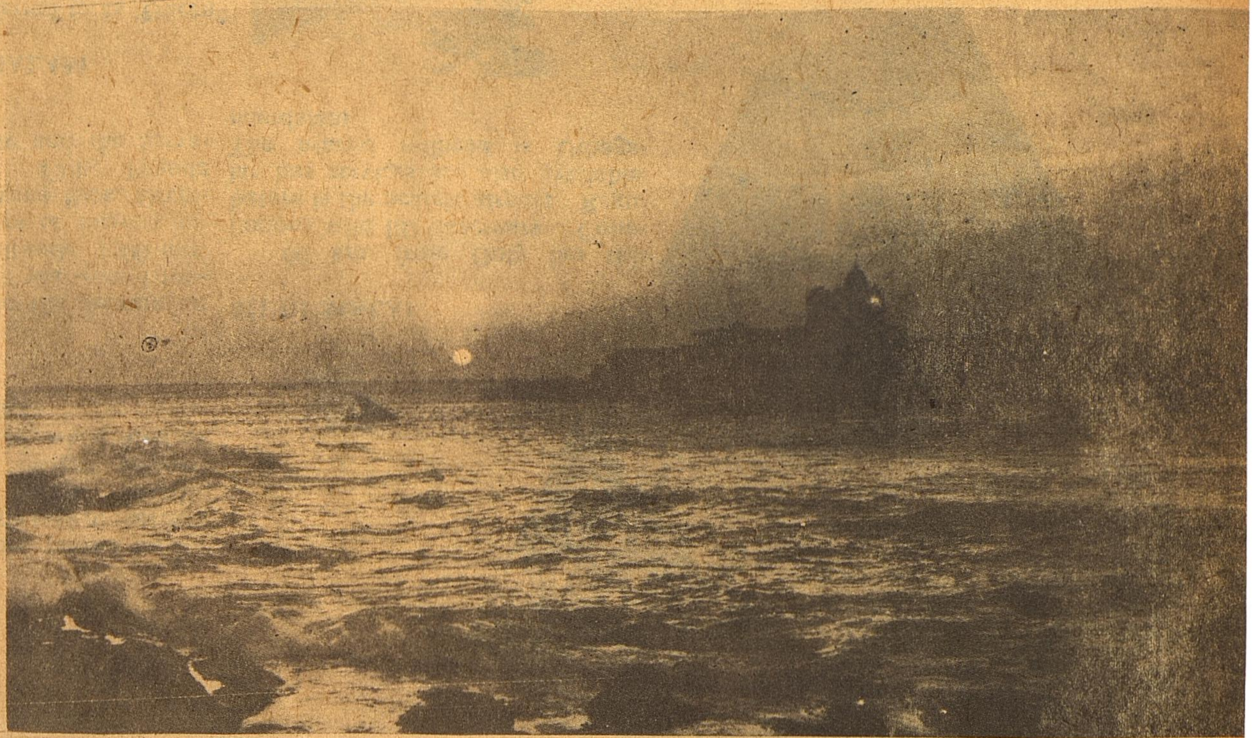


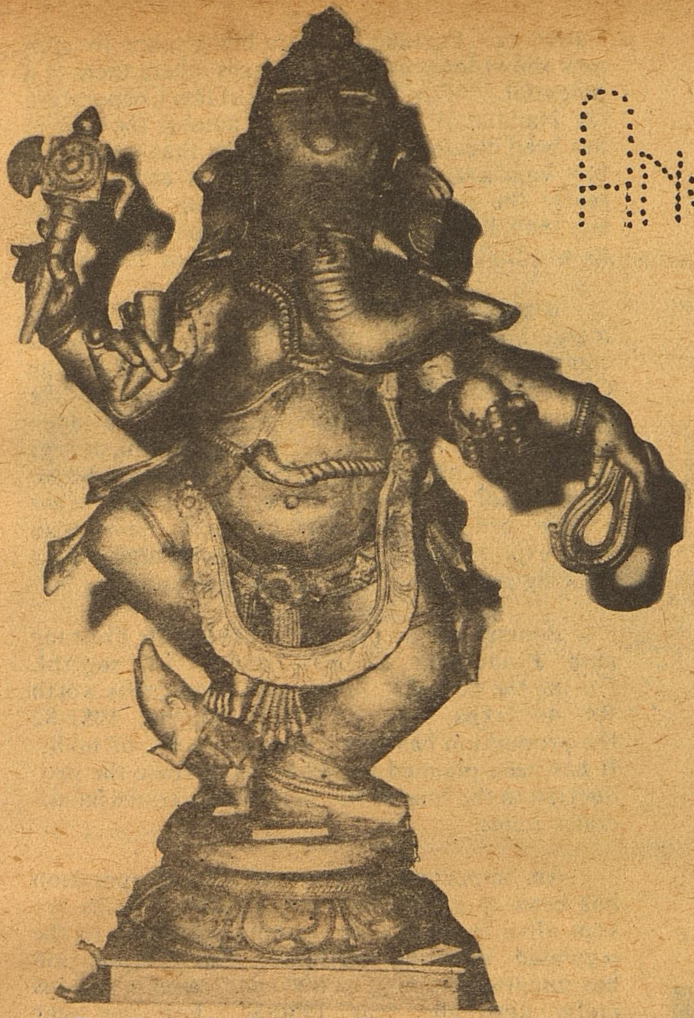
RAMESWARAM

One of the most sacred towns of India, it is well known for its temple—corridor—the longest in India, the Bathing Ghat, Ganthamathana Parvatham, Kothandaramar temple, Kurusadai and other nearby islands.

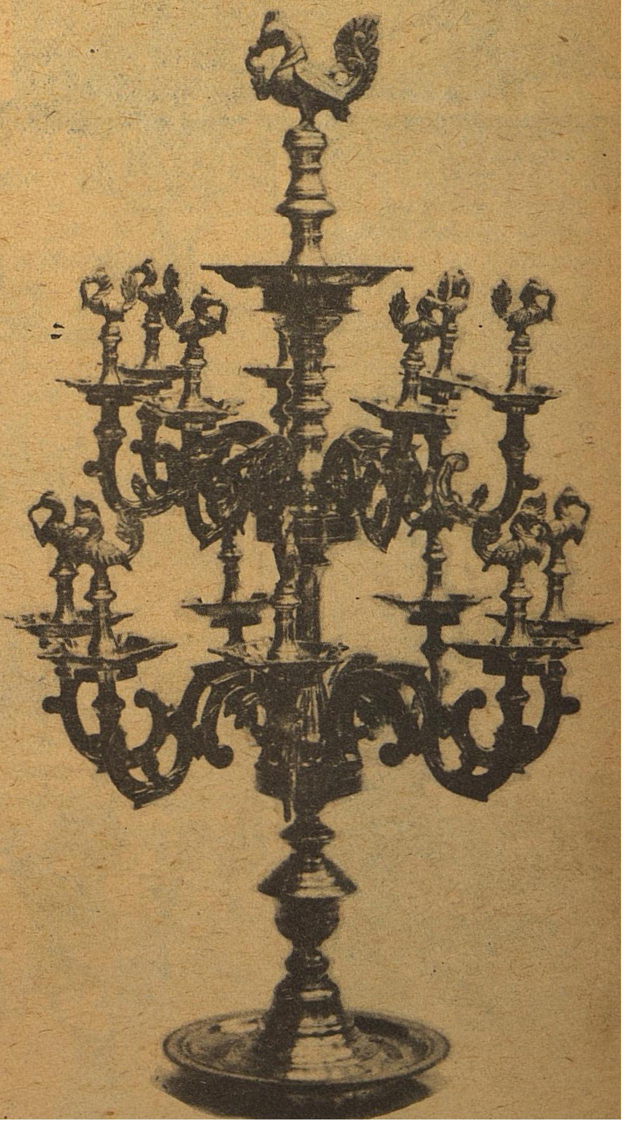
KANNIYAKUMARI

Another famous pilgrim centre situated at Land's end of India, at the confluence of the Indian Ocean, the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea. Places to see include the Kumari Amman Temple, Gandhi Memorial, the Beach and the Vivekananda Memorial. Nearby excursions include Suchindram Temple with musical pillars (13 km) the palace and museum at Padmanabhapuram (32 km.) and the circular fort at Vattakottai (6 km.)





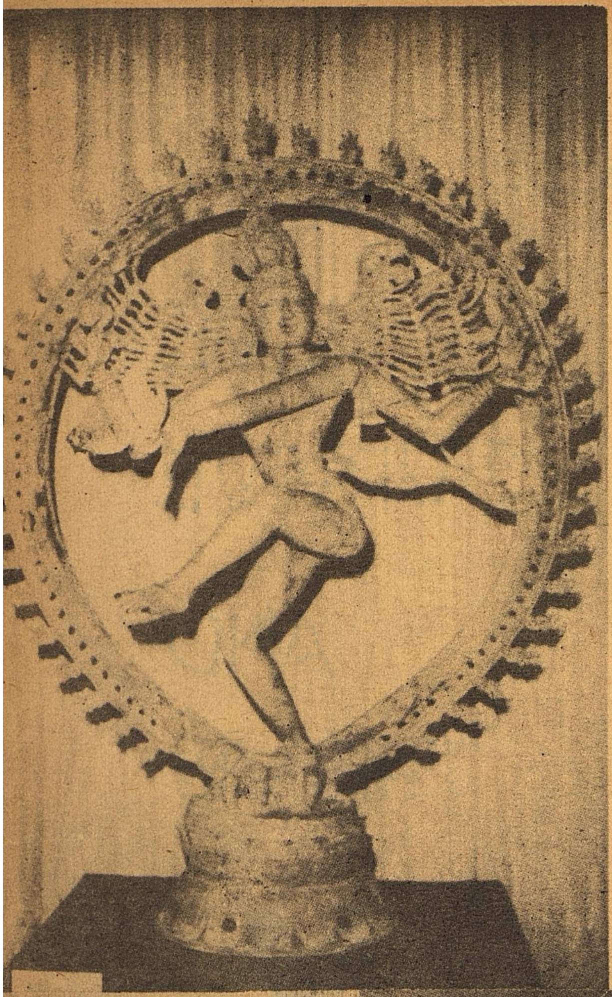
ANCIENT SKILLS LIVE SURVIVE AND THRIVE

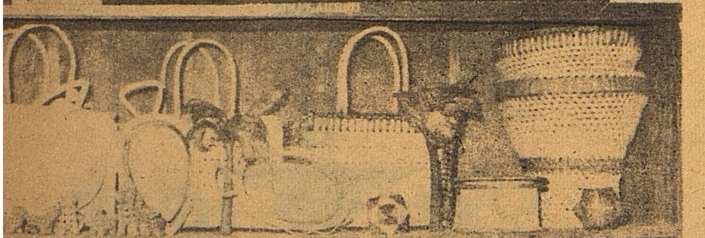


Tamilnadu land of temples and long beaches-is also a craft paradise. Nestled among the paddy fileds or palm groves are craftsmen with centuries of skill in stone, metal, wood, palmleaf, pith, grass, cane, etc.

The traditional crafts of Tamilnadu have for long enjoyed world-wide fame. To promote the Tamilnadu handicrafts and uplift the traditional craftsmen, Tamilnadu Handicrafts Development Corporation Limited started functioning from 1-8-73 by amalgamating the then existing sales-cum-procurement Depot of the Industries Department and the stock-in-trade of the Madras State Handicrafts Cooperative Marketing Society. The training-cum-production centres run by the Industries Department were also taken over by this Corporation from 1-11-74. The object of setting up the Tamilnadu Handicrafts Development Corporation Ltd., known as " Poompuhar " is to give more assistance to the craftsmen families by helping them not only in Marketing, but also in production. The Corporation is procuring handicrafts items from the Artisans at various places at reasonable prices and marketing them through Showrooms in Tamilnadu and in other states.

The sale of Handicrafts has been gradually increasing year after year due to the efforts of this Corporation which is guided ably by an effective Board and a Minister and Chief Minister who have the genuine interest of the craftsmen at heart. The Corporation has also opened new showrooms at Chidambaram, Kanyaumari and



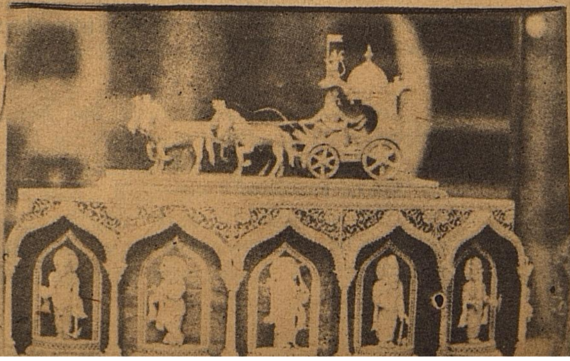


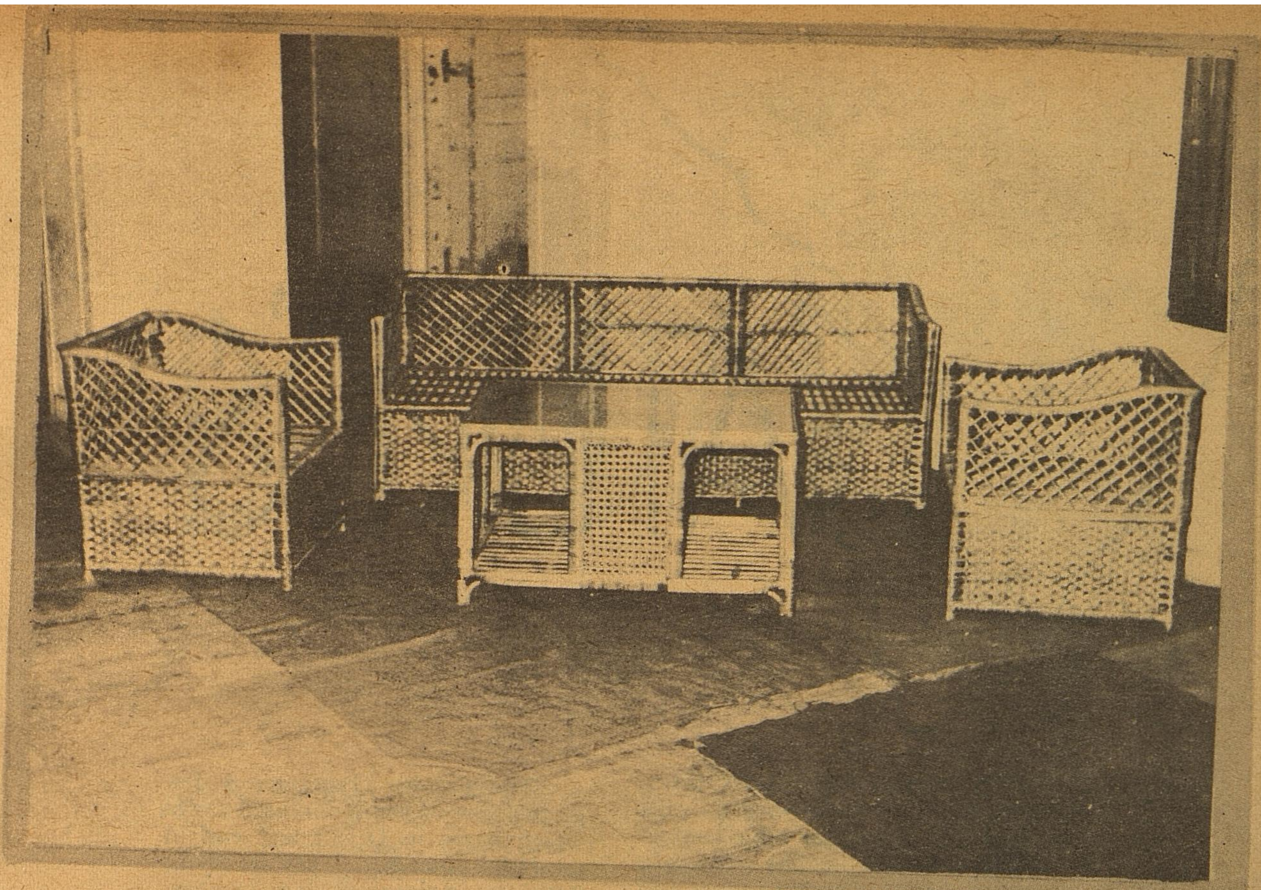
Tuticorin. Further steps are being taken to open new showrooms at various places where there is a potential. After the setting up of this Corporation for Handicrafts an awareness among the public has been created among the public that when they buy handicrafts they are helping a cause. Currently the sales of the Corporation are a little less than Rs. 2 crores and the Corporation hopes to substantially increase it further in 1982-83.

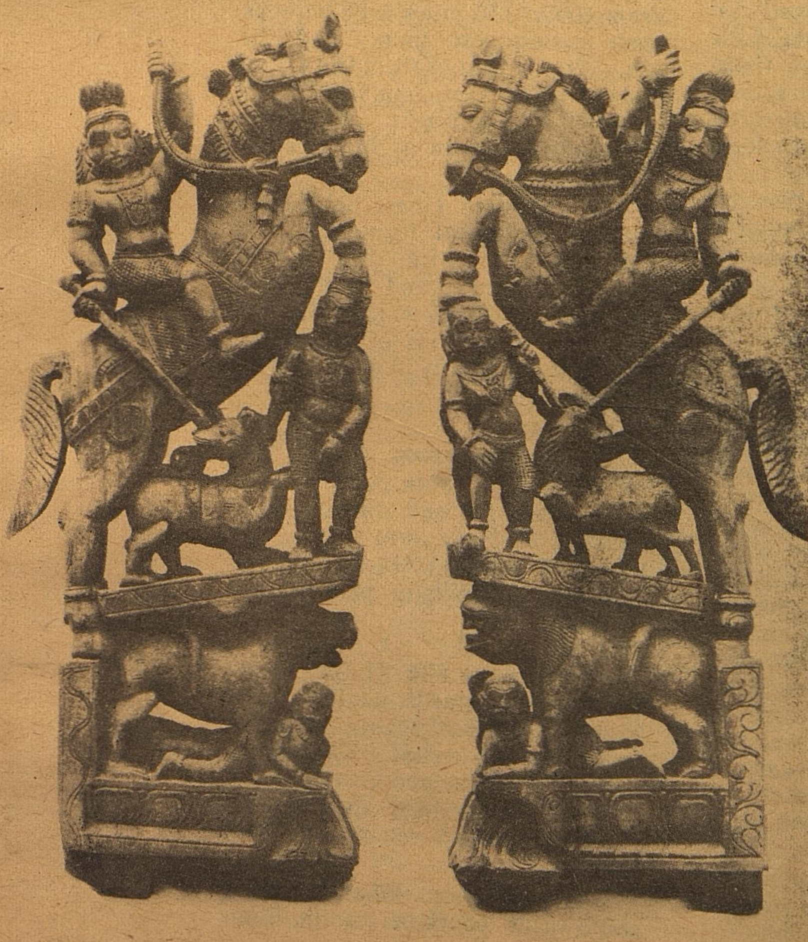
Since the emphasis of the Corporation is marketing, a special thrust is being given to increase the export earnings. During 1981-82 the Corporation has exported prestigious items like a Temple Car to Kualalumpur, a massive wooden panel to adorn the Atomic Energy Establishment at Vienna and an Asthabhuja Anjaneya Stone carved idol to Kualalumbur, apart from other export orders. Palmleaf products have also been exported to London and a continuous effort is being maintained to step up the exports.

Poompuhar at present is having 20 Training cum Production Centres under its control. During the period 80-81 total handicrafts worth Rs. 40 lakhs were produced. During 1981-82 the production has been increased to Rs. 63 lakhs. It has been planned for 82-83 to increase the production to the tune of Rs. 70 lakhs in various handicrafts items.

An important activity of the Corporation has been to ensure that the hereditary skills are kept alive by imparting training according to the regulated scientific methods. The Corporation has imparted training to 690 candidates in various crafts upto the year 1980-81. For the year 1981-82, 222 candidates have undergone training. This training programme will be continued in 1982-83 also. The Corporation has so far given employment to 265 candidates out of the candidates trained by it and a number of Artisans families are given indirect employment in various crafts.

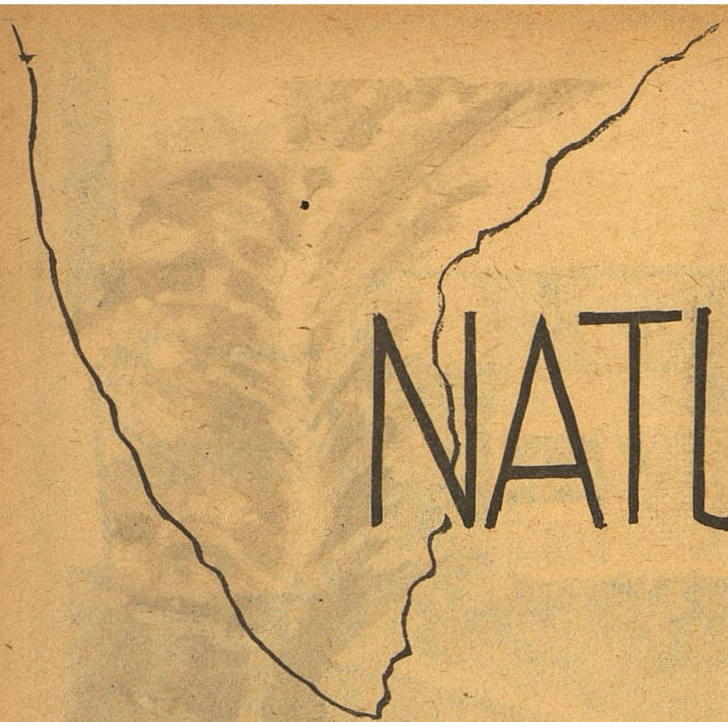






The Handicrafts sector represents a skill handed down from generation to generation. The Corporation has been keeping alive this tradition by running the training schemes. The skills of the village craftsmen are being exposed to public through the various showrooms of the Corporation. Due to the efforts of the Corporation, it is hoped to give a wider coverage and canvas to these skills. Keeping this in mind, the Corporation has also organised special exhibitions for the crafts of Tamil Nadu in places like Bangalore, Bombay, Calcutta and New Delhi so that the buyers outside Tamil Nadu and exporters also get an exposure to these crafts. The efforts have been a success and will be continued. Besides Training, Production and Marketing activities, Poompuhar is giving State Awards to the talented craftsmen every year.

Thus, thanks to the Government and the Tamilnadu Handicrafts Development Corporation (Poompuhar) the ancient skills live, survive and thrive. The Craftsman keeps alive the ancient skill and the Government keeps the craftsman more than alive. Confident that there is a benevolent buyer for the craft items, the potter, the icon maker, the wood carver...all work with a smile on their face and cheer in their heart.



NATURE'S BOUNDARY

The ranges of mountains, forming the eastern and western walls support the triangular table-land of Southern India. The Eastern Ghats run in fragmentary spurs and ranges down the east side of the Peninsula, receding inland and leaving broad tracts between their base and their coast. The Western Ghats form the great sea-wall for the west side of the Peninsula, with only a narrow strip between them and the shore. At one point they rise in precipices and headboards out of the ocean, and truly look like colossal 'landing stairs' from the sea. The Eastern and Western ghats meet at an angle in the Nilgiris, and so complete the three sides of the interior table land. The inner plateau has an elevation seldom exceeding 2,000 to 3,000 feet. Its best-known hills are the Nilgiris (blue mountains) which contain Ootacamund (7,000 feet). The highest point, the Dodabetta, reaches 8,760 feet. The Cauvery rises in these mountains, and traverses the whole breadth of the central table-land before they reach the ocean on the eastern shores of India. On the east, the country is comparatively open, and everywhere accessible to the spread of civilization. It is here that all the great kingdoms of Tamil Nadu had their capitals. The east coast is a comparatively dry region. Except in the delta of the Cauvery the crops are dependant upon local rainfall which rarely exceeds 40 inches in the year. The soil is poor, the general elevation high, and the mountains are not profusely covered with forest.

The Eastern Ghats are a disjointed line of small confused ranges which begin in Orissa and end in the Nilgiri plateau. They are about 2,000 feet in elevation on an average, and their highest peaks are less than 6,000 feet. As they travel south wards they recede further inland, and leave a stretch of low country from 100 to 150 miles wide between their easternmost spurs and the sea. To the west of them lies a level upland plain, averaging from 1,000 to 2,000 feet in height, one section of which is known as the Deccan.

The Eastern Ghats belongs to no one geological formation, and the rocks, of which they consist, vary in structure and origin with the land through which they pass. The various sections of the range indeed differ greatly in other characteristics also.

In North Arcot, Salem and Coimbatore the range is very broken and contain no well marked lines, until in the last-named district the Billigiri-Rangan Hills, which lie close to the Nilgiri plateau, are reached.

Few rivers rise in the range. Further Southwards no stream of importance flow from it. It is not usually a watershed. The rivers Pennar, Ponniyar and Cauvery have all found their way through the many gaps which occur in its long course.

The Western Ghats running southwards continue in the same general direction at a distance of 50 to 100 miles from the sea until they terminate at Kanyakumari the Southernmost extremity of India. Soon after emerging from Coorg they are joined by the range of the Eastern Ghats, which sweeps down from the other side of the peninsula ; and at the point of junction they rise up high into the plateau of the Nilgiris, on which stand the hill stations of Ootacamund (7,000 feet), Coonoor, Wellington and Kotaigiri, and whose loftiest peaks are Dodabetta (8,760 feet) and Makurti (over 8,000).

Immediately south of this plateau the range, which now runs between the Districts of Malabar and Coimbatore, is interrupted by the remarkable Palghat Gap, the only break in the whole of the length. This is about 16 miles wide, and is scarcely more than 1,000 feet above the level of the sea. The Railway runs through it, and it thus forms the chief line of communication between the two sides of this part of the peninsula. South of this gap the Ghats rise abruptly again to even more than their former height. At this point they are known by the local name of the Anamalais, or 'Elephant hills' and the minor ranges they here throw off to the west and east are called respectively the Nelliampathis and the Palani Hills. On the latter is situated the sanatorium of Kodaikanal. Thereafter, as they run down to Kanyakumari they resume their former name.

Considerable areas on the Madras section of the range have been opened up by European Capital in the last half-century for the cultivation of tea, coffee, cinchona, and cardamoms. Its forests are also of great commercial value, bamboos, blackwood and teak growing with special luxuriance. The heavy forest with which the range is clothed is the source of the most valuable of the rivers which traverse the drier country to the east namely the Cauvery, Vaigai and Tambraparani.

Before the days of roads and railways the Ghats rendered communication between the west and east coasts of Tamilnadu a matter of great difficulty ; and the result has been that the people of the strip of land which lies between them and the sea differ widely in appearance, languages, customs, and laws of inheritance from those in the eastern part of the State. On the range itself moreover are found several primitive tribes, among whom may be mentioned the well-known Todas of the Nilgiris, the Kurumbas of the same plateau, and the Kadars of the Anaimalais.

FOLK ARTS OF TAMIL NADU

Tamil Nadu is endowed with a great cultural heritage with rare types of stylised forms of indigenous dances and music which have preserved their pristine purity and grace through several centuries. The Soul of India lies in its villages and the Soul of her art lies in her ancient Folk Forms of Art. The process of evolution of the folk forms owes itself to the vocation of the people. The village folks in Tamilnadu are mainly engaged in agriculture which involves much physical labour and strain. The various places of agriculture have their seasons. As the arts of the village folk are intertwined with their vocation, their forms of art also changes along with the phases of agriculture.

Thus the calm and serene folkmusic, which predominates from the time of ploughing thefields, gives place to folk dances performed in ecstasy after the harvest.

FOLK MUSIC

In the villages, music rings alongside with the work of the people—Tunes spring from their toil. Flow of music synchronises with the serving of seeds. Music at the plough! Music at the fields. Music at the Canal bunds! Music while rearing the crops! Music while harvesting the produce! Music while threshing the grains! Thus the whole village reverberates with music.

One of the popular forms of folk music is Villupattu. Six to eight singers use a huge bow-like instrument with tinkling bells attached to the thick string of the bow. A mud pot gently beaten in the mouth by a leather piece and an Udukku is also used. The themes centre round the meritorious deeds of Gods and Goddesses, heroes and heroines. Katta Bomman and Desing Raja are favourite themes of their folk songs. The leader of this group will narrate the song stage by stage and the rest will punctuate it by repetition.

KAICHILAMBU :

Kaichilambu is a sort of folk Katha Kalakshepam set to the tune of music and by musically sounding silambus. Group dancing is also done to the tune of this music.

There are other kinds of popular folk music like harvest song etc.

FOLK DANCES :

Folk dances can be grouped under three major heads for convenient study :

1. Dances by professional troupes :

2. Community dances amongst all sections of people during social and religious festivities; and

3. Tribal dances of the hills and forests.

DANCES BY PROFESSIONAL TROUPES :

Amongst the folk dances of professional troupes, Karagam, Kavadi, Puraviattam or Dummy Horse Dance, Therukoothu(folk play) and Bommalattam (Puppetry) are the most prevalent popular varieties.

KARAGAM :

Karagam or dancing with a decorated pot or vessel on the head to the accompaniment of Nagaswaram music is a folk art popular in Tamil Nadu. It is danced mostly for propitiating Mariamman and other village deities to get rains and to ward off epidemics.

KAVADI

The Kavadi is a well known type of folk dances. Most of the devotees of Lord Muruga take to it as a devotional offering to the almighty. The Kavadi is an arched wood and cloth work. The short wooden based rod held on the neck of the dancer is swung by him round and round according to his dance movements. Some professional experts display amazing feets of skill in it by balancing and moving the Kavadi all over the body and in various poses without the support of their hands. The dance is performed according to the varied tunes of the popular tune known as 'Kavadi Chindu'. The orchestra is Naiyandi Melam consisting of two Nagaswarams, two Thavils, a Pambai and a Thamukku.

Naiyandi Melam is an orchestra by itself and is used as accompaniment for Karagam, Kavadi, dummy horse dance and other folk dances. The peculiarity of it is that the instrumentalists too dance while playing their instruments.

PURAVI Attam or Dummy Horse Dance :

In the Puravi Attam the dummy horse is made with bamboo frame work covered with thick paper or card board. It is so lavishly decorated as to resemble a well-bred palace-horse or war-horse. Through a hole at the back of the horse, the dancer stands, with the upper portion of his body above the waist being visible and his legs fitted up with short wooden stilts. This gives him an appearance of riding the horse and he dances to the tune of the Naiyandi Melam.

BOMMALATAM (Puppetry)

In the Bommalattam, the characters of a drama are represented by decorated dolls and their movements are manipulated by black strings held by skilled puppetteers standing behind a short screen. Scenes from puranas like Harichandra, Rukumangada etc. are generally depicted. The music is not only of a high order approaching the classical modes but also very appealing. The acting of the dolls appear almost human and they are made to dance Bharata Natyam items like Alarippu, Jathiswaram and Thillana.

PEACOCK Dance

The dancer wears the mask of a peacock and also the feathers and dances to the tune of music, initative of the movement and gait of the peacock. This dance is generally performed as an interlude in Karagam and Kavadi dances.

FOLK Drama :

The folk plays of Tamilnadu popularly known as "Therukoothu' are generally about puranic themes and they are presented with music, dance and dialogues. The dancer-actors wear antique costumes. Good troupes may be said to be mobile educational institutions, for they try to inculcate in the minds of the masses a deep love of God, good conduct, social virtues and a capacity to distintuish the good from the bad. These folk plays are performed generally during occasions of Temple festivals.

Weavers, weaving at break of day
Why do you weave a garment so gay ?
Blue as the wing of a halcyon wild
We weave the robes of a new born child
Weavers, weaving at fall of night
Why do you weave the garment so bright ?
Like the plumes of a peacock purple and green
We weave the marriage veils of a queen
Weavers, weaving solemn and still
What do you weave in the moon-light chill ?
White as a feather and white as a cloud
We weave a dead man's funeral shroud.

The pride of Tamilnadu Handlooms

Thus wrote Sarojini Naidu when she watched the skilled artist at work whose nimble fingers flew in and out to give shape to his colourful imagination.

The Muslins from India were in demand as far back as 5,000 B. C. to enshroud the Egyptian mummies. Legend has it that these fine Muslins when moistened and spread on grass became almost invisible. It is difficult to believe that human hands could weave fabrics so fine.

The Indian Weaver has been the artisan as well as the artist-his hands executed what his imagination visualized. And his natural sensitivity to rythm and colour, line and curve made him a perfect designer and a master craftsman. The skill has passed from father to son, so that in the course of time a tradition has been built and sustained.

Each state has its own distintive weave, design or style. The gorgeous saris and celebrated brocades of Varanasi, the Himrus of Hyderabad, the beautiful silks of Kancheepuram, the traditional sarees of Adyar, the delicate work of Chanderi, Maheshwaries of Madhyapradesh, the Patan Patolas of Gujarat, the Chikan muslins of Lucknow, the prints of Farukabad, Bombay and Jaipur are all fascinating to the fashion conscious.

Silk Sarees :

The finest silk sarees of myriad rich hues and laden with Zari and lace, are the pride of Kanchi where an almost-time-less handloom industry flourishes. Kanchi's exquisite silk sarees are woven from pure mulberry silk in contrasting colours, with vivid bold designs, broad borders with designs woven in jari or silk thread, and have an enviable reputation for lustre, durability and finish, matched by no other fabrics, synthetics included.

More than 5,000 families of weavers ply the looms and their spectacular creations are marketed by a number of co-operatives.

The silk sarees of Kanchipuram have a market in foreign countries and when the tourists visit Kancheepuram, they make it a point to buy these sarees. These sarees can be worn as such or can be cut and tailored into beautiful evening grows which will look fantastic.

Dress designers the world over have taken an increasing interest in the handloom textiles of our country as fashion fabrics with great potentialities. The shades and designs are too numerous to choose from as also the materials to work with.

By the term 'Ceramics' is implied a material made of clay or similar substance formed in plastic state and then dried and fired to a temperature high enough to give the necessary strength.

Until the latter part of the nineteenth century, Ceramics was used only to designate clay wares. But now the term Ceramics is used in a wider sense. Articles made from ceramic raw materials and which are made plastic by other means than by the use of clay are also now classified as ceramics provided that, after shaping, they are subjected to a firing process. Ceramics can therefore be defined as products of "high temperature chemistry of non-metalic materials".

CERAMIC INDUSTRY ENCOMPASSES PRODUCTION OF:

Crockery, sanitary wares, glazed tiles, high tension insulators, low tension insulators, stoneware pipes, stoneware containers, structural ware and construction materials refractories, corderite, steatite, rutile, titanium, zircon bodies used exhaustively in the manufacture of low loss insulators, insulating, materials and abrasives like silicon carbide, fused alumina, boron-carbide etc.,

The more important raw materials used in the Ceramic Industry are:

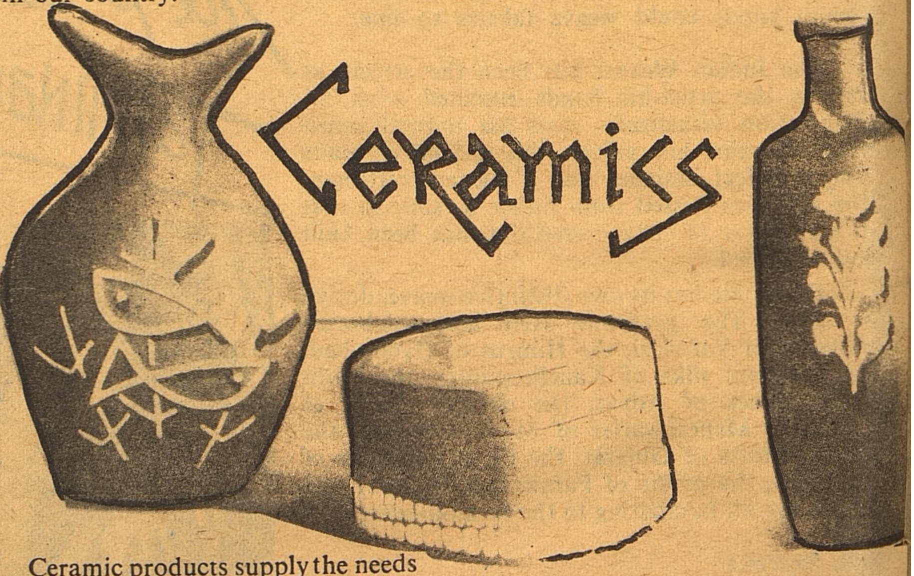
Ball Clay, bauxite, borax, calcite, china clay, dolomite, felspar, fire clays, graphite, gypsum, kyanite, limestone, magnesite, quartz and silica, silliminite, steatite, zirocon etc.,

Apart from this, chemicals like Zinc Oxide, Tin Oxide, Cobalt Oxide, Manganese-di-Oxide, Vanadium Pentoxide ,Boric Oxide etc., are also extensively used especially for the preparation of coloured stains and glazes.

Out of these raw materials, good deposits of buaxite, calcite, china clay, felspar, fire clays, gypsum, limestones, magnesite and quartz are available in Tamilnadu China clay, which forms a major ingredient in the manufacture of white wares, is available from lignite mines of Neyveli in South Arcot District. The naturally occuring crude clay has to be washed and purified before use. For this purpose, a washing plant with a capacity of 6,000 tonnes per annum is available at Neyveli. Apart from this, it has been reported that deposits of China clay occur in the mica mines of Kollapalli and Cherambadi in Gudalur Taluk of Nilgiris District.

Good quality deposits of felspar and quarts suitable for the Ceramic Industry occur in large quantities in Trichy and Salem Districts. Fire Clay of good refractory grade is available from Panruti, Tindivanam and Neyveli in South Arcot District and from Sivaganga in Ramanathapuram District.

Gypsum is ground and calcined to convert it into Plaster of Paris which finds use in the Ceramic industry for the manufacture of moulds. Gypsum occurs in Trichy and Coimbatore districts in our State. It is also recovered as a by-product from Salt pans in Tuticorin. The chief use of Magnesite is in the manufacture of refractory bricks for lining furnaces especially in iron and steel industry. The magnesite of Salem district is of high quality and output from Salem accounts for a very high percentageof the total production in our country.

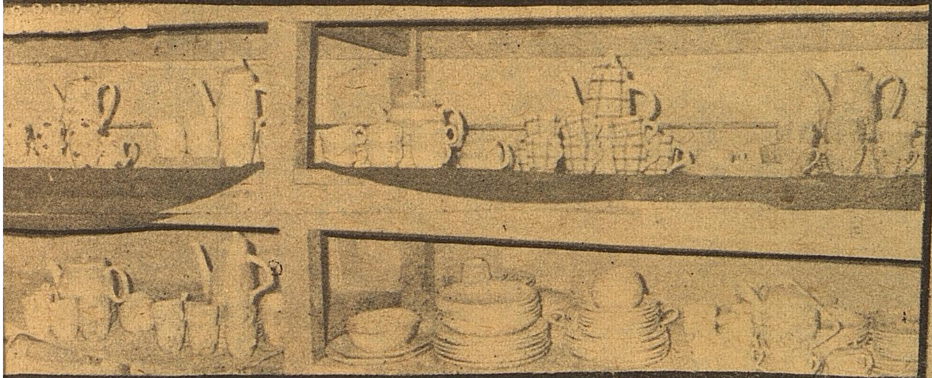


Ceramic products supply the needs of man in the construction and decoration of buildings (Bricks and Tiles): they are used in the manufacture of metals (refractory materials); as insulators in the electrical industry (porcelain and steatite,) in the manufacture of chemical products (Stoneware and porcelain), in sanitation (Stoneware and Vitreous wares), in drainage of water and sewage (Stonewares). The pottery branch of the ceramic industry supplies the various domestic requirements from the kitchen to the dining room. In the production of artware, practically all types of ceramic materials are used from ordinary red clay to fine china.

Ceramic Industry is one of the basic industries whose products are so vital for the rapid industrialisation of our country. Many industries are absolutely dependent upon refractories which is a branch of Ceramic Industry. Power industry uses great quantities in boiler furnaces. The Cement Industry requires Refractories for their Rotary kilns. The Iron and Steel industry is vitally concerned with refractories. In the non-ferrous industry also, refractories play an essential part both for withstanding high temperatures and for resisting various types of slags. Refractories are also of vital importance to many other industries such as kilns for ceramic production, glass furnaces etc. With the rapid industrialisation taking place in our country ,a large demand for refractories has been created and this accounts for a number of refractory manufacturing units all over the country.

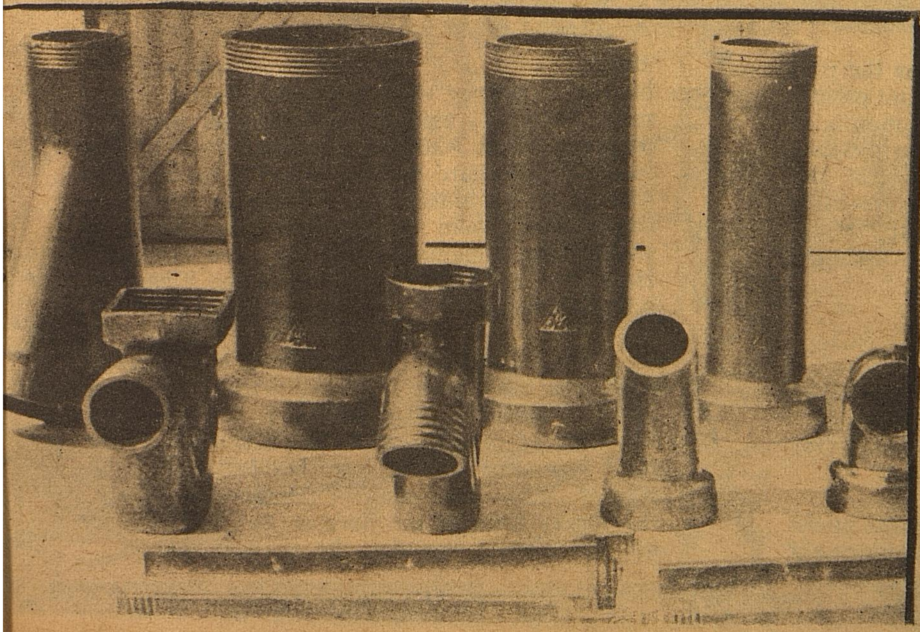
In our country, the development of the industry has been particularly rapid during the last thirty years. Prior to Independence the ceramic requirements of our country were met mostly by imports. We have now succeeded in developing a fairly sophisticated industry producing Dinner ware, Sanitary ware, Insulators, Glazed Tiles, Refractories etc. Not only has there been a rapid rise in production but there has been constant improvement in quality also.

Along with developments in other industrial fields, the Ceramic Industry has achieved notable progress in Tamil Nadu. The installed capacity and production have increased considerably over the past few years. The accelarated building programme has created a great demand for sanitaryware and bricks. Programmes of generation of electric power and its distribution have stepped up the demand for Insulators. The Ceramic industry including Brick and Tile manufacture is at present affording employment opportunities to over 2 lakh persons of all



categories. To overcome the dearth of technically qualified people of Ceramic Training Institute was astr-ted at Vridhachalam in 1964 and is offering a 4 year course in Ceramic which includes one year inplant training in commercial units. Every year 15 students are selected and they are paid a stipend of Rs. 100/- each per month. 10 more students are also recruited without stipend which includes 5 seats reserved for nominees of Ceramic Factories and other Ceramic institutions.

During 1965 two major factories for the manufacture of high tension insulators with collaboration of well known foreign firms have gone into production. Similarly a major unit for manufacture of sanitaryware has been started in collaboration with a German firm. At present all these units are engaged in expanding their production facilities on an ambitious scale. In the field of heavy clay manufacture, two fully mechanised Brick units, a Roofing Tile unit, three Stoneware Pipe factories and five Refractory units are in operation in the State. Besides, there are several small scale units engaged in the manufacture of varied types of Ceramic ware.



In the public sector also the development has been equally impressive and in this respect, the activities of ceramic units at Vridhachalam, South Arcot District are noteworthy. These units originally started during the sixtees under the aegis of the Department of Industries and Commerce were later merged in 1974 under a separate public limited company known as Tamilnadu Ceramics Limited (TACEL). The existence of high potential for developing Ceramic Industries was visualised more than two decades back and Government took the initiative to set up an integrated ceramic complex at Vridhachalam. It may be said that this step of the Government had a catalysticeffect resulting in a number of manufacturing units coming up in the private sector. Besides setting up medium sized commercial units at Vridhachalam for manufacture of Sanitaryware and Stoneware Pipes, Government have also started a training centre in Art Pottery and a Functional Industrial Estate for Ceramics with supporting service and firing facilities for the benefits of Small Scale enterpreneurs. The modern oil fired Tunnel Kiln constructed at a cost of Rs. 35.00 lakhs is a unique kiln facility provided at Vridhachalam and the same is being availed of by over 80 Small Scale Units manufacturing a wide range of ceramic products which includes L.T. Insulators, crockery, sanitaryware, Industrial ceramic products, H.T. Insulators etc. Tacel also runs a fully Mechanised Brick Unit at Thirumazhisai near Poonamalle, a Rural work centre at Omalur and a training unit in Art Pottery at Madras.

M/s Ramakrishnan Clay Products, Vellore are the pioneers in the manufacture of fire clay sanitary wares. Most of the requirements of red clay building bricks in Madras city are being met by about 100 brick units situated beyond Aminjakarai West of Madras city.

The advancing techniques of metallurgy, fast developing field of electronics and the rapidly growing Science of outer space are throwing great challenges to the Ceramic Industry. Ceramics of tomorrow offers to the talented scientists and technologists an exciting field of vast potentialities.

BUDDHA VIHARA
MUD MORTARMIX

S.K. PADMANABHAN, B.E., M.I.S.A.E.
Executive Engineer (Agriculture Engineering)

Pumpuhar (Thanjavur District) was the port capital city of Chola Empire in the Sangam period. The city which once flourished at the mouth of river Kaveri is mentioned by Foreign writers like PTOLEMY and PLINY (Ancient Greek and Roman Geographers). Sangam Literatures like "Pattinappalai", "Silappathikaram", and "Manimekalai" describe the layout of the city and sing its glory.

Buddha Vihara and Mud Mortar Mix:

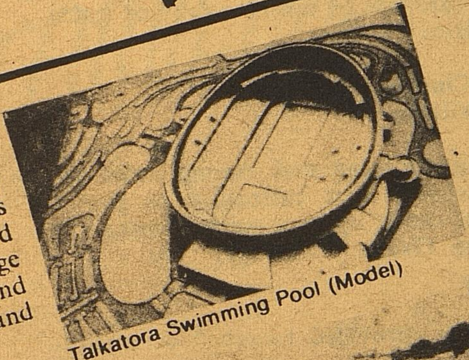
The site of Buddha Vihar (1600 year old) at Pallavaneeswaram of Kaveripoompattinam (Pumpuhar) was excavated by the Archaeological Survey of India and it formed part of old Pumpuhar.

Buddha Vihara was built of well burnt bricks of various sizes (14 x 7" x 3" bricks for basement and 9" x 5 x 2" for superstructure) and the binding substance was only Mud Mortar. Generally, Mortar is used to bind together the stone or bricks of the walls of a superstructure to provide smooth hard surface. What is required for Mortar is obviously some substance that will harden and adhere strongly to brick or stone for putting these materials together in a structure. Here Mud Mortar was used in Buddha Vihara, as binding substance.

Detailed analysis of the ancient Mud Mortar (1600 year old) used in Buddha Vihara showed that **FINE FIBROUS MATERIALS (PANDANUS SPECIES) (தாழம்பூ நார்) had been used as the chief ingredient for binding,** besides sand and jaggery. With the ageing of the Buddha Vihara, the sugary taste of the Sucrose has lessened but not the binding capacity, the analysis showed.

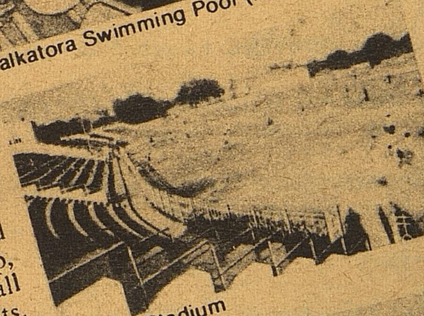
ASIAN GAMES VILLAGE

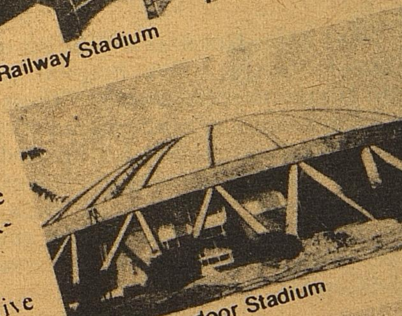
The Asian Games village in the Sirifort area will be an exclusive township for the stay of all the International Sports men/women and officials numbering 5,000 participating in the various events during Asian Games 1982. Besides furnished residential accommodations, the integral village project aims at providing spacious building and landscape, facilities for dining, recreations and relaxation.


Talkatora Swimming Pool (Model)

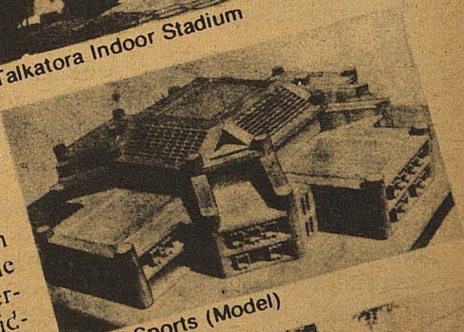
Village Facilities

Besides living accommodation, the Complex would have a practice area for wrestlers, weight lifters and boxers. It will also have a sauna bath for boxers and lifters. Also being provided nearby are an athletic track for warming up, separate football and hockey fields, two volleyball courts, two basketball courts and two tennis courts. The Village will have a community hall where the weightlifting events will be held. It will also be used for cultural programmes, when the weight lifting is not in progress. Seating capacity in this Hall will cater for 2,200 people. Provision has been made for a Mini-Hospital, a shopping centre and other attractions, including a tower restaurant-cum-viewing gallery.


Railway Stadium


Talkatora Indoor Stadium

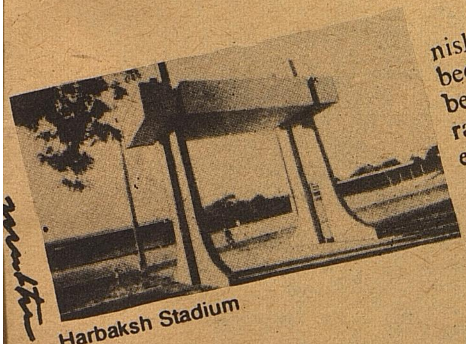
The Complex will also have an Administrative Block and a dining-cum-kitchen complex, large enough to provide dining facilities for 2000 athletes at a time.

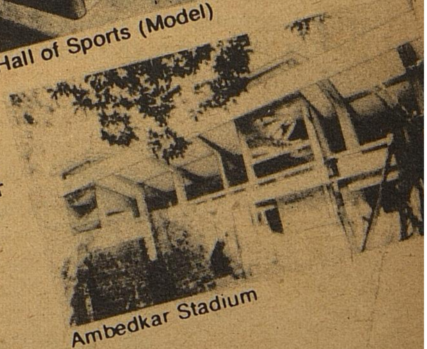

Hall of Sports (Model)

Village Accommodation

Each dwelling unit will have three fully furnished bedrooms and a drawing room. Each bedroom will house two participants. Most of the bedrooms have their own independent open terraces. A hot plate and a tea kettle will be provided in each kitchen.

The chefs-de-mission attached to each contingent, will be the sole occupant of one complete dwelling unit. One room of the dwelling unit will be available for office use, where a typewriter and stenotypist will be provided.


Harbaksh Stadium


Ambedkar Stadium

The Administrative Block will have a Conference Room which can be booked in advance. This room will be large enough to accommodate about 30 persons.

Meals and Drinking Water

Three varieties of food will be served-Indian. Continental and Chinese.

There are four dining halls in the Asian Games Village whereallthethree varieties will be served. There will be a different menu every day. Special care will be taken to provide tested and purified drinking water.

Opening and Closing Dates of the Village

Though the opening and closing dates are yet to be finalised, it is customary to permit participants to check up in a week prior to the opening of the Games.

Transportation

Cars will be provided to chefs-de-mission.

Deluxe buses will be provided for the participants and team officials.

Transport arrangements will also be provided within the Asian Games Village.

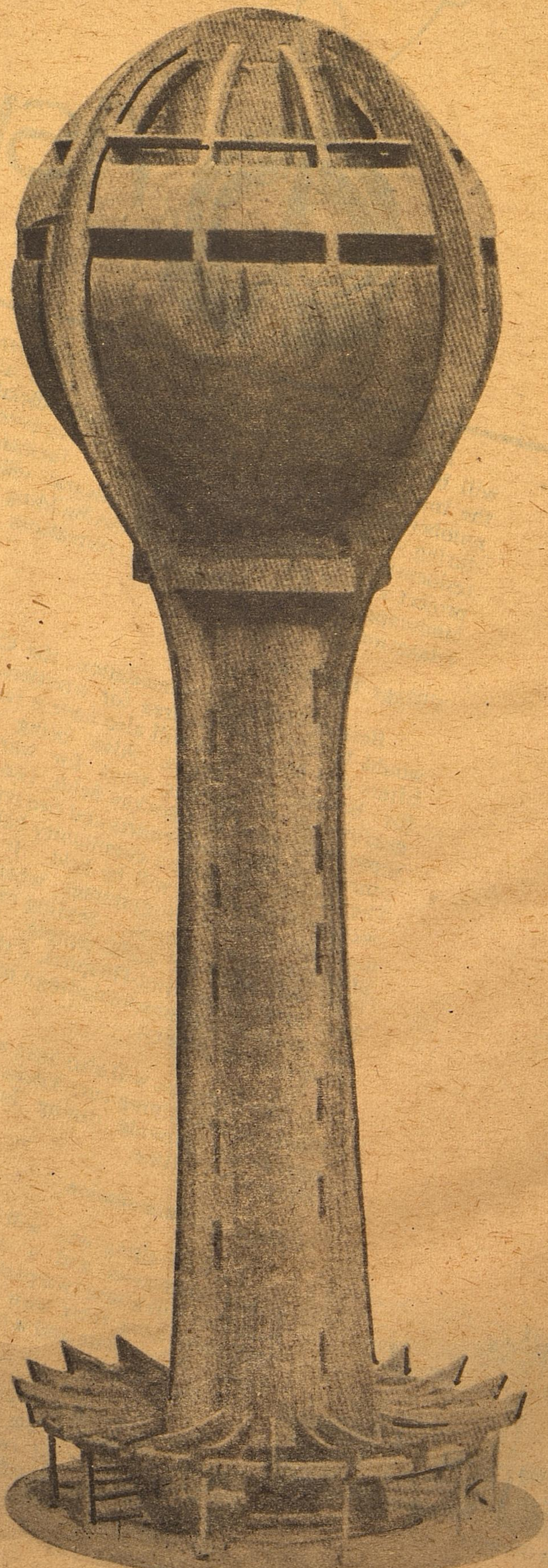
Medical Services

A ten-bed Mini-Hospital will be set up at the Asian Games Village. This hospital will take care of the minimum requirementsof those in need of medical treatment and also accommodate those in need of hospitalisation for short periods. The Mini-Hospital will also have the services of various specialists and will be equipped with X-Ray apparatus-laboratories and facilities for emergency operations. Two ambulances will be attached to the Mini-Hospital.

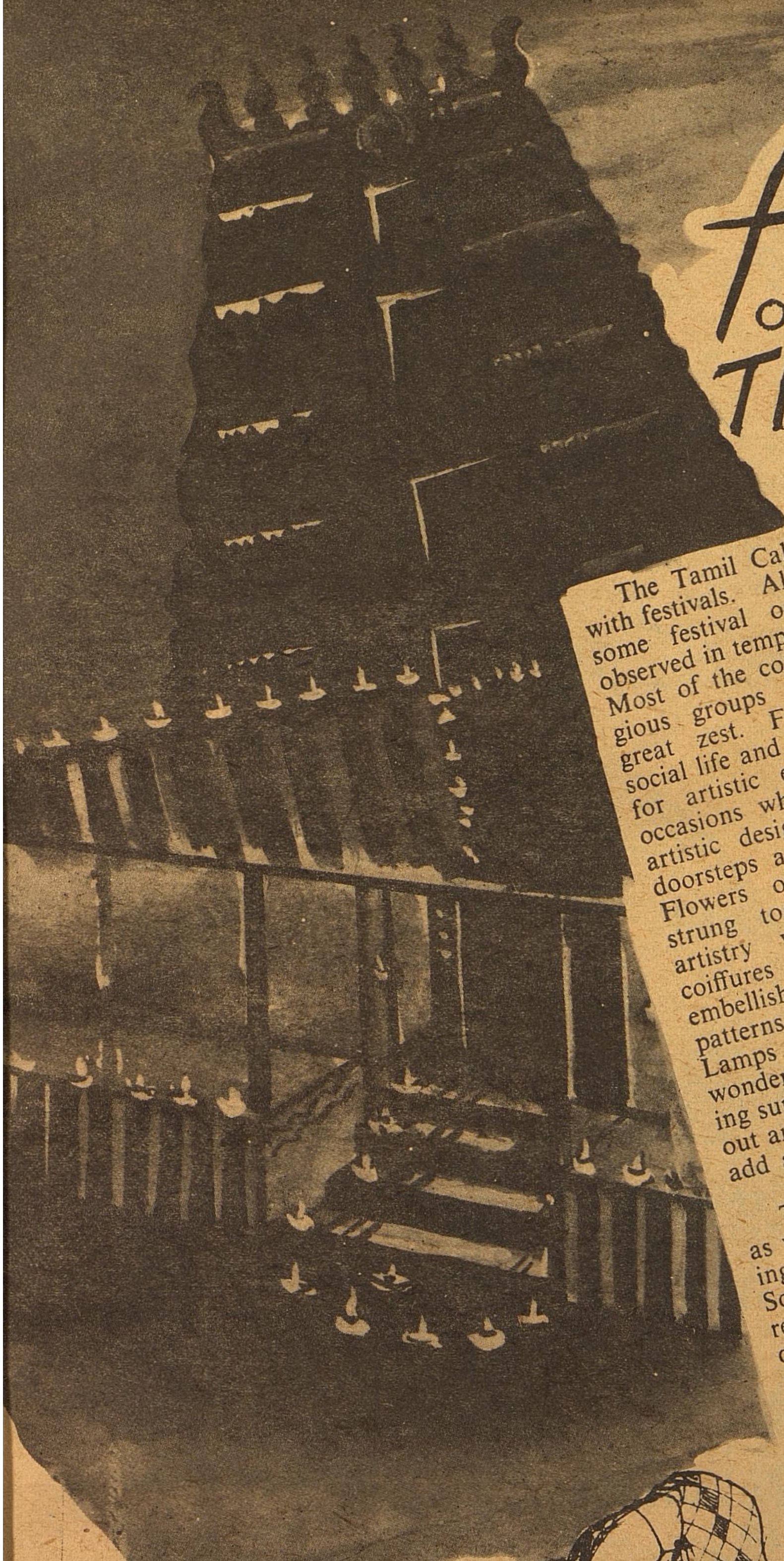
Each sports venue will have two first-aid posts, one inside the Stadium and another outside. An ambulance will also stand-by at each sports venue.

First aid facilities will be provided at the practice sites. "Dope" and "Sex" tests, as required under the rules will be carried out. Arrangements for these tests will be made at each venue and 'samples' thus collected, will be sent for test to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences.

Delhi Golf Club



Tower-Restaurant cum Viewing Gallery. (Model)

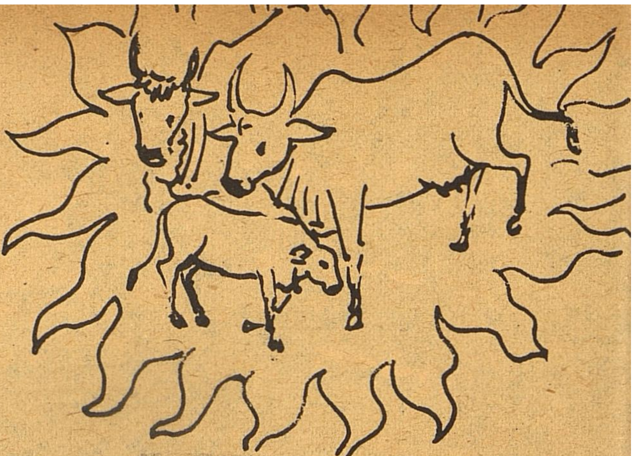


festivals OF TAMIL NADU

The Tamil Calendar is studded with festivals. Almost every month some festival or other is being observed in temples and households. Most of the communities and religious groups observe them with great zest. Festivals enliven the social life and provide opportunities for artistic expression. They are occasions when women prepare artistic designs (kolums) on their doorsteps and in their courtyards. Flowers of variegated hues are strung together with astonishing artistry which adorn the pretty coiffures of graceful women. They embellish their hands with lovely patterns made of Renna paste. Lamps in copper and bronze in wonderous shapes and sizes, revealing superior craftsmanship are taken out and lit on these occasions which add an enchanting beauty.

The festivals of Tamil Nadu are as variegated as they are enchanting. Yet, no two festivals are alike. Some of them are purely pastoral reflecting as they do the simple joy of peasant life. Some others are rooted in tradition and are woven around interesting episodes in our mythology.

A festival is an occasion for gaiety and mirth. It may be a harvest festival like Pongal celebrated in January (Thai) or the floating festival or car festival or the Navarathri which is a colourful event. The idols of Gods and Godesses and other dolls are arranged in tiers with an aesthetic sense. It provides an occasion for a social meet. Women and children dressed in their best impart colour and enchantment to the festival. Tamil Nadu is converted into a fairyland during the nine days of this festival.



Karthigai Deepam, the festival of lights, celebrated in November-December is a festival of great beauty and charm. Hundreds of little earthern lamps are placed in a row in every house, the village turned into a little fairyland of lights. Little tongues of flame dancing before the gentle breeze leave an enchanting impression in the mind. Friends and relatives dressed in their best visit each other's houses to exchange greetings. Sweets are exchanged and songs sung and dances held to enliven the event.

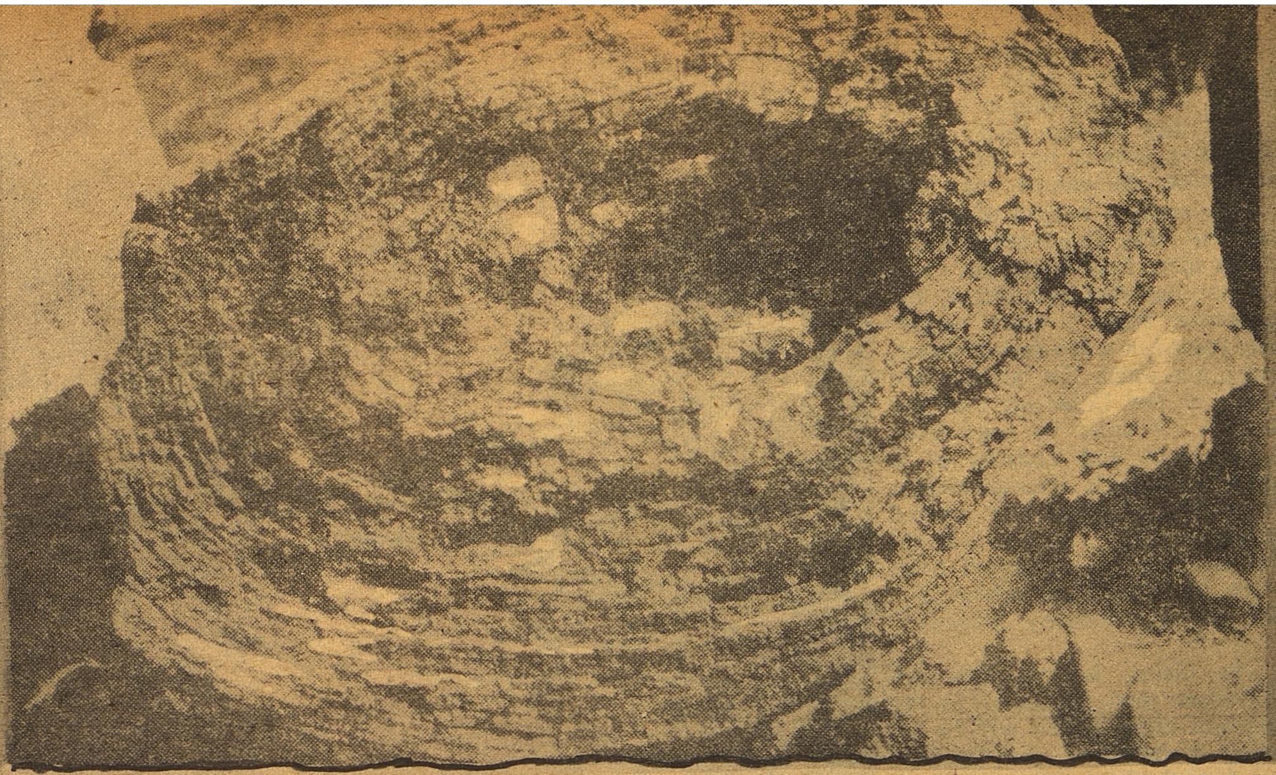
Take in a festival when you come to India, No land demands so much of its legends, or, in celebrating the past bedecks the present so marvellously.

PONGAL

Pongal is the national festival of Tamil Nadu. Celebrated for four days commencing from the last day of Margazhi, Pongal is a festival of thanks-giving when the peasant worships the Sun, the Earth and the Cattle for all their bounties. The first day of the festival called Bhogi is spent in feasting and merry making. On the second day which is Pongal, he worships the Sun. Sugarcane and turmeric, sheafs of paddy and newly prepared jaggery, vegetables and dhals are all devoutly offered, the members of the family joining in the worship. On the third day the cow is worshipped. The farmer paints the horns of his bulls and cows in rich colours and covers the horns with shining metal caps and decorates them with gay coloured beads and bells. The cows and bulls which are thus gaily decorted are led out in procession to the beat of drums, pipe horns and music. In Madurai and Ramanathapuram, a kind of bull fight, called the "JALLIKATTU" is held. Bundless of currency notes are tied to the horns of ferrocious bulls and unarmed young men try to rest the bundles. In days of old rich mirasdars would rear bulls especially for this occasion and whoever tames the bull would get the hand of his daughter. This practice is no more now. Rice made into coloured balls are left in open terraces and courtyards for the birds.

On the last day, "Kannum Pongal" men, women and children of all ages dressed in colourful clothes visit the elders to pay their regards and respects. In villages, the families go to the river banks, cook and eat the meals in the open. They sing and dance the Kummi and the Kolattam and enjoy themselves. In towns and cities, dressed in their best, they throng the cinema houses, exhibitions and museums. In general it is an outing for the entire family more or less a picnic.

What Pongal means to the Tamils will be seen from the way he prepares for it. He cleans the house, white washes it which gives a new look. He buys new clothes for all the members of his family. On the third day, he greets the elders. In villages, the peasant takes the vegetables from his land to his landlord and greets him and receives a token sum in return.



Fossil Park at THIRUVAKKARAI

Thiruvakkarai in South Arcot District is about 5 Kms. from the main road of Tindivanam—Pondicherry via Mailam. A metalled road to Thiruvakkarai branches off near Karasanur from the Tindivanam—Pondy road. It is about 25 Kms. from Tindivanam via Mailam and 21 Kms. from Pondicherry.

Thiruvakkarai is situated on the bank of the Gingee river. In the olden days it was an important town and its ancient streets can still be traced in the vicinity. Its Siva temple dedicated to Chandramouliswara, which stands in a commanding position on the bank of the river, is a striking construction with a tower of seven storeys, 151 feet above the sea-level. In front of it is a stone Nandi some six feet high, which is probably the largest in the district and near it are two big images of Ganesha and a large lingam. The temple was constructed by the famous Chola queen, Sembiyan Madheviyar. It was formerly much bigger and had a thousand pillared Mandapam. There are numerous inscriptions on the walls and the gateways mostly relating to gifts of gold, sheep or cows for maintaining lights, and lands for the upkeep of the temple. The thousand-pillared mandapam and the gopuram were built by one Ammayappan Sambuvarayan, who took the Pandya country. Perhaps a local chieftain who assisted Kulottunga Chola III in his conquest of the Pandya Kingdom. A second mandapam and gopuram were built by one Kangeyan in 1130. The fame of the temple has been sung by Tirugnana Sambandar.

Near this village and areas adjoining to it large petrified tree trunks have been discovered. They occur scattered over the surface in low ridges of ferruginous grits. Some of these fossil tree trunks are more than 30.48 Metres (100 ft) long and 1.52 metres (5 ft) in diameter. As these are devoid of bark, roots or branches, they must have been transported to their present resting place before they became petrified. The tree trunks have been completely altered and the organic matter in them has been replaced by silica. The formations are known geologically as Cuddalore series and are nearly 20 million years old. There is a popular belief that these petrified tree trunks are the bones of a rakshasa or demon, slain on the spot by Vishnu. The earliest account of these fossil woods is by M. Sonnerat (1781 AD) an European naturalist. The petrified tree trunks found here and in the areas adjoining to it have been studied in some detail since long. They constitute the woody portions of Mosembrioxylon, Schmidianum (a Gymnosparm) and some Angiosparms. The modern families like Guthjerae, Celestraceae leguminiseae (Tamarind Family) and Euphoribicae (Hibisous) are likely to be represented in them. Some of these woody fossils resemble the modern species of Tamarinds and it is quite possible that many of the modern living forms existed during those remote periods.

PICTURESQUE PITCHAVARAM

Backwaters always hold a special fascination for the Lover of nature. This phenomenon of the ebb and flow of the tidal waters intertwining amidst myriad islands is unusual on the Madras coast and is consequently a subject of special attraction. The Pichavaram Forest is not a mere back water but combines another rare occurrence, the "mangrove forest", trees permanently rooted in a few feet of water. Pichavaram, which lies between the mouths of the Coleroon and the Vellar, is 12 miles by road from Chidambaram and consists of a number of islands interspersing a vast expanse of water and covered with green trees. The area is about 2,800 acres and is separated from the sea by a sand bar which is a beach of extraordinary loveliness.

The visitor has to approach Pichavaram through Killai to the Karithurai shore which will be his starting point for the journey. From here the boat takes him for a cruise around the backwaters in the general direction of the sea. He can weave in and out and around the islets and reach the sand bar in 30 to 40 minutes. To the botanist, the rare species like Aviconnia and Rhizophora will present a special attraction. To the Zoologist, no doubt, the sight of numerous birds like watersnipes, Cormorants, Egrets, Storks, Herons, Spoonbills and Pellicans, will hold great interest. To the casual visitor, the boat ride is an unforgettable experience, especially on a cool evening when the rays of the setting sun shine across the waters silhouetting on the horizon the Gopurams of the Chidambaram Temple. There are also water sports if one is so inclined. The beach is an ideal swim spot and the angler has opportunities waiting his bait in shallow waters.

A word about the mangrove species. They have a number of structural adaptations to suit factors like water logging, salinity, strong winds and lack of soil acration. Stilted roots provide firm anchorage to the trees and 'breathing roots' grow above the level of water. These can be seen standing in radiating rows all along the banks and function as organs of respiration. Their fruits are adapted to float for long periods without deterioration. Germination in these trees takes place while the fruit is still attached to the parent plant and the embryo grows out of the fruit while it is still so attached until it falls off and takes immediate root in the wet soil. These trees have a few uses as tanning and dyeing material, poles, staves and fuel.

The development plans for Pichavaram as a tourist resort are still at the initial stage. It is now

connected to Chidambaram by a motorable blacktopped road, 18 miles in length. It is proposed to provide two motor boats to begin with, which will be anchored at the Karithurai shore where there is a newly constructed jotty. There will be a tiny rest house on the Karithurai shore consisting of two rooms with baths attached and later on a bathing house on the sand bar separating the backwaters from the sea. The development of a few rest spots on the islands is also under consideration where boats can land and visitors can enjoy a few hours of angling. It is hoped that these modest facilities will be attractive enough for the inclusion of Pichavaram in the itinerary of the tourist visiting Chidambaram or Pondicherry or both.

The backwaters are the favourite fishing grounds of a sizeable community of fishermen living in and around Killai. The country craft used by them is a type of canoe. They use ordinary thrownets and drag-nets made of cotton, although nylon is becoming increasingly popular due to the efforts of the Department. The fishermen have banded themselves into a co-operative society which provides its members with a number of facilities.

Ten miles north of Pichavaram lies the famous historical town of Portonovo, named by the Portuguese who were the earliest European settlers here at the end of the 16th Century. The local name is Parangipettai. It was once a famous port and is now only a fishing harbour. It figured prominently during the European scramble in this part of the country in the 17th and 18th centuries and was occupied at one time or the other by the Portuguese, Dutch, Danes, French and the English. It was also captured by the Marathas and by Hyder Ali. Among the many interesting battles fought in and around Portonovo in the 18th century was a renowned battle between Hyder Ali and Sir Eyre Coote in 1781, memorials to which still exist in Portonovo. A little known fact about this little town, is that an iron and steel works, which used Salem iron ore, was established as far back as 1830 by an ex-civil Servant Mr. J. M. Heath, which boasted 'of a quality equal to the best Swedish iron', selling at 1/3rd the cost. The company had a very eventful career and due to financial and administrative difficulties, especially the inconsistent attitude of the Board of Directors of the East India Company, had to finally close down in 1867.

GARMENTS in LEATHER

Garments manufactured from sheep and goat skins are not new in the leather trade. The first man and woman who came to the world used leather for protection from winter.

Garments made out of leather are very popular especially in European countries. They are equally good compared to the garments made out of synthetic materials, cotton and wollen. Garment leathers are easy to handle and could be easily dry cleaned.

Garment Leathers are classified into two varieties. 1. Grain Garment 2. Suede Garment.

(1) Grain Garment :

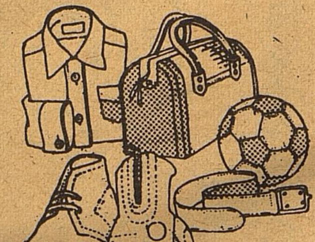
Popularly known in Leather trade as Nappa. The above garments are manufactured from sheep and cow calf skins. This grain garments are mostly used by men for motor cycle riding and long coats to protect them from winter.

2. Suede Garments :

This garment is mainly used by ladies for Jackets and skirts. This is very light and is finished on the flesh side of the skins. This variety is manufactured from sheep and goat skins.

Garments made out of leathers could be finished into any colours just like the garments made out of synethetics, cotton and wollen materials.

Tansi Garment Leather Unit not only manufacture finished leather for garments but also manufacture finished leathers for shoe industry. The leather manufactured in this unit are only from sheep and goat skins and they are meant for both export and internal market. The capacity of the unit is about 500 pieces per day (i.e. 2,500 sq. ft.) earning a foreign exchange of about 2,500 dollars per day.



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